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ALTHOUGH THE BELGIAN-AMERICAN trade agreement appears on the surface to be more significant than the unfortunate Brazilian pact, it comes as a bitter disillusionment to those who had hoped that the Administration's tariff policy would effect a substantial breach in the world's trade barriers. In all only about one-third of the dutiable imports from Belgium are affected by the tariff cuts, and on these the actual reduction averages but 24 per cent—this despite the fact that one-fifth of the articles are not produced in the United States, and none competes directly with products of domestic manufacture. In the case of eighteen of the forty-seven items on which reductions are granted, American exports are greater than imports, indicating that the United States possesses a definite competitive advantage without recourse to tariff protection. And despite their non-competitive character, seventeen out of the forty-seven articles carried duties of from 50 to 150 per cent! The duty on plate glass, for example, was equivalent to an ad valorem levy of 86.9 per cent in 1931, although recent improvements in American technique have practically eliminated the possibility of foreign competition. In exchange for these "concessions," Belgium has agreed to lower duties an average of 35 per cent on forty-five different articles, imports of which aggregated $16,335,000 in 1933, or three times the amount covered by the American reduction. Concessions of from 64 to 80 per cent were made in the duties on automobile parts, American exports of which were valued at nearly $5,000,000 in 1928, and important reductions were made on fruits, lard, and rubber products. In contrast with the Brazilian pact, where the meagerness of the American concessions was defended on the ground that Brazil had a favorable balance of trade, the United States has not only maintained a large favorable balance with Belgium, but has increased its relative advantage in the past few years. Thus it is apparent once more that tariff reciprocity, instead of being utilized to correct the top-heavy trade balance of the United States, is being employed as a weapon to push down the defenses of debtor countries in such a manner as to accentuate the basic maladjustments in the flow of international payments.

THE REVOLT IN GREECE represents a dramatic effort on the part of the republicans to stave off the establishment of a military dictatorship which would restore King George to the throne. While discontent has long been evidenced against the reactionary Tsaldaris government, the immediate crisis seems to have been precipitated by the appointment of General Metaxas, leader of the Greek fascists, as a member of the Cabinet and as commander of the Athenian headquarters. General Metaxas appears to enjoy the full confidence and support of General Kondylis, Minister of War, and leader of the army. The presence of the veteran politician, Eleutherios Venizelos, in the ranks of the revolutionists is sufficient to indicate that the uprising is in no sense a radical one; it suggests rather a rallying of the forces of parliamentarianism against the threat of suppression of all political liberties. At this stage the revolt gives every indication of being more successful than was the uprising last October in Spain against forces of a similar character. If it is, Greece will take its place as the only country in southern or central Europe where even the forms of democracy are preserved.

GREAT BRITAIN'S PROPOSAL for an international loan to the Nanking government is significant as a desperate and belated effort to stem the tide of Japanese expansion in the Far East. It is obvious that Nanking must be aided if it is to maintain its power in the face of growing economic disintegration and an accompanying increase in Communist influence. All phases of China's national economy are suffering from the deflation induced by the silver policy of the United States. Foreign trade is falling off, industrial production is declining, and unemployment—always severe in China—is on the increase. In the past, assistance to China has usually been granted by an international consortium, but in the present crisis Japan has sought to take advantage of the country's extremity to further its long-range political and economic aspirations. Recent reports from Nanking indicate that Chiang Kai-shek has already yielded to many of the Japanese demands in anticipation of substantial financial aid, a hypothesis which is strengthened by Japan's rejection of Britain's offer. Whether Britain and

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America by their tardy and half-hearted offer of assistance can prevent these plans from being carried to fruition is problematical. However, one point is clear: if the Western powers fail in their demand for participation in the proposed loan, the Open Door in China will be finally closed.

A GREAT EDITOR and a still greater reformer and crusader was lost to journalism in the death of Fremont Older, editor of the San Francisco *Call-Bulletin,* on March 3. Indeed, it is doubtful whether American journalism has ever produced a more dauntless fighter in behalf of wronged individuals and unpopular causes than Mr. Older. Without being a great writer, or a fine writer, he could strike out with such vigor and power as to suggest the unleashing of an elemental force. It was he who sent Mayor Eugene Schmitz and Abraham Ruef to San Quentin as a result of his graft exposures—only to turn around within six months and do his utmost to get Ruef out of jail. It was the last of his man hunts. The personal bitterness he felt against individual wrongdoers passed then and there. He had suddenly come to realize that sending people to jail as he had been doing with ruthless ferocity, often using indefensible and cruel means to achieve his ends, was not going to cure the evils from which society was suffering. He threw himself into prison reform, into the redemption of crooks instead of their punishment; he fought for them with the same intensity with which he had waged war against them. It was he who came to the aid of Tom Mooney and ferreted out the truth about the case, for which achievement the rich and respectable of San Francisco were ready to tear him limb from limb. Yet it is a regrettable fact that this superb champion of the oppressed had to spend his declining years on a Hearst newspaper whose owner he despised. None the less, his loss is a great one, for there is no one left in California journalism to compare with him. And if ever a state needed crusaders for justice and fair play to the workers, it is that same California.

THE SPECTACULAR DECLINE in the exchange value of sterling has once again revived the specter of a world-wide currency war. While the fall of the pound is apparently due to rumors of an impending political crisis in England rather than to deliberate governmental policy, it has been widely interpreted as a maneuver to give British exporters an advantage over their American and Continental rivals. Irrespective of the accuracy of this charge, the cheapened pound is bound to accentuate the difficulties of the gold bloc and if continued is likely to drive France to abandon its efforts to maintain the franc at its existing parity. Should the pound and the franc both suffer a sharp decline, inflationary groups in this country are almost certain to renew pressure for the further devaluation of the dollar. Thus, without any country actually willing it, the long-feared competition in currency depreciation may already be under way. If so, it is evident that this country must shoulder primary responsibility. For nearly two years the dollar has been undervalued on the world market, to the advantage of our export trade; yet during the entire time we have refused either to fix the value of the dollar permanently or to join with other nations in a scheme for international stabilization. Faced with unremitting competition with the cheap dollar, foreign countries, particularly those remaining on gold, have been forced to choose between continued deflation, trade restrictions, and devaluation. If they should ultimately decide to follow our example and choose the easiest and most dangerous of the three expedients, we have only Professor Warren to thank. It is to be hoped, however, that a belated recognition of the gravity of the situation will spur the Administration to reopen negotiations for an international agreement which, whatever action is taken on gold, would prevent cutthroat competition between the two leading Anglo-Saxon countries.

"IT MUST BE WITH A RIFLE and a bayonet, cold steel," Brigadier General Seth E. Howard, the man responsible for the National Guard in California, assured the House subcommittee in the hearing on the War Department bill. He was complaining about the meager protection of California against labor troubles. "We have in California 6,000,000 people and short of 6,500 troops. Troops to be effective must be armed with rifles, because a pistol is no arm to place in the hands of troops with these groups of disturbers that we are confronted with in the country today. Neither are clubs." Cold steel, he went on to say, was essential. He admitted he was giving rifles to the coast artillery and training the men to use them. "If we get medical units we will give them rifles and make riflemen out of them." The general then went on in a mood of candor: "I want to advise you that today I have my troops under arms, in violation, possibly, of the regulations of the National Guard Bureau. But it is necessary for us to have our picked men with their uniforms and rifles, at their homes in Sacramento. I have two companies on guard, I have the arsenal under guard, and the city and county authorities have increased their force by 300 or 400 per cent." Asked how many men had been responsible for the "revolutionary" condition in California last summer, the general replied: "In the neighborhood of 1,300. There was a very small number of actual agitators, originally less than 300."

FURTHER MILITARIZATION of American youth was advocated before the same committee by General MacArthur, chief of staff. He has his eye on the strapping young men in the CCC camps. "These men are all processed," he said, using the professional term. "They are ready and fit for military training." The particular place in national life he would have them fill is the enlisted reserve, an element in national defense now neglected. "I think nothing would be finer than to take these CCC men who have had six months in camp and give them perhaps two months more in which they would receive a nucleus of military training. We then could enrol them in the enlisted reserve . . . If we had 300,000 enlisted reserves who could be called to the colors immediately, our conditions of preparation for defense would be immeasurably bettered." The army already controls the men in the camps as to clothing, feeding, housekeeping, morale, and discipline. The next step would be easy, and the prestige now enjoyed by General MacArthur at the Capitol makes it appear a probable one. Congressmen listen to him with deference, forgetting that it was he who donned his medals and drove the bonus army out of Washington.

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JAMES RORTY, poet, advertising man, and journalist, who did a lively stint on *The Nation* staff for several months before his Western tour, has made the trip through the Imperial Valley. It is a hazardous journey for any liberal, radical, or mere sightseer, and Mr. Rorty's experience was no exception. He was arrested on suspicion—California suspicions, like other products of that state, are of the giant variety. He was thrown into jail for a day. His person and his car were searched for subversive literature or thoughts. He was "grilled." And finally he was escorted a hundred miles to the border and dumped into Arizona quite without regard to his wishes in the matter. In general he was subjected to all the indignities from which the Bill of Rights is designed to protect an American citizen even though he may have the temerity to enter one of the agricultural valleys of California during a lettuce strike. Unlike literally hundreds of other victims, Mr. Rorty was able to command enough publicity to get Congress interested in the sorry state of civil liberties in the Imperial Valley. He is scheduled to appear before the House Labor Committee when it opens hearings on the Wagner labor-disputes bill—William Connery, the chairman, wants to hear at first hand how agricultural "stiffs" are treated by the grower-shippers who rule California. And a special Congressional investigation of the California labor situation and the Rorty incident has been proposed. California is perhaps the richest field for Congressional prospectors in search of exploitation, terrorization, and the suppression of civil liberties.

THAT PECULIAR American institution, trial by Congressional inquiry, is to be set in motion to estimate the administration of Governor Pearson in the Virgin Islands. The effect of the evidence on the public will, we assume, be the determining factor in deciding whether this Republican governor is to be retained by a Democratic Administration. One motive behind the investigation, undoubtedly the chief one, is to get him out, replace him with a Democrat, and end the iniquity of considering an American colonial possession immune to the benefits of the spoils system. But we welcome the inquiry, if only to put an end to whisperings and insinuations. That the fight against Governor Pearson should be financed by Casper Holstein, a wealthy Harlem Negro and Virgin Islander, gives an indication of the kind of cross-currents astir in the case. Holstein, named as one of the policy bankers accepting Dutch Schultz's overlordship, has sent $100,000 to the islands, where naturally he rates as a philanthropist. He is the "angel" of the local anti-Pearson squad. The public may be puzzled as to why the White House does nothing about Judge Wilson, whose conduct in the MacIntosh trial has had national publicity since described by our Washington correspondent. It must be explained by the fact that the judge enjoys the protection of Senator Pat Harrison, who is too valuable to the White House in these days of the Senate deadlock to be deflected from his party loyalty by censure of his protege.

WHILE COLLEGE TEACHERS and students the country over are uniting to oppose William Randolph Hearst's latest red-baiting campaign and his attacks upon "subversive teaching" in the schools, Dr. John G. Bowman, chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh, has come forward with a touching tribute to Mr. Hearst. Dr. Bowman rallies "every intelligent citizen" to the Hearst cause, which, he believes, is dedicated to "uphold our ideals of patriotism and of reverence." It is significant that this fulsome praise is coincident with the report of the American Association of University Professors on the dismissal of Professor Ralph E. Turner from the University of Pittsburgh last year. The investigators charge that Professor Turner was dropped to soothe the feelings and touch the pocket-books of Pittsburgh's steel and coal millionaires in a fund-raising campaign for the university. So impressive is their report that Pennsylvania legislators, who have recently passed out of the Mellon sphere of influence, are contemplating a thorough delving into matters at the university, which is a state-aided institution. It is probably true that our colleges are filled with undesirable elements, as Mr. Hearst seems to believe, but we are under the impression that they are to be found among the Bowmans rather than among the Turners, and we trust that the state legislature will concur in this judgment.

FURTHER EVIDENCE of the rising anti-red hysteria in this country is furnished by the unprecedented difficulties encountered by the League for Industrial Democracy in presenting its usual midwinter lecture courses. In five cities recently audiences have been evicted. In Lawrence, Kansas, the lectures were booked to be held in a high school. After the first lecture permission was withdrawn as the school board bowed its head to the anti-red campaign of the local press. A neighborhood settlement had agreed to house the L. I. D. lectures in Louisville, Kentucky. But the Colonial Dames heard about it and they told the American Legion and the Legion told the Community Chest, from which the neighborhood house gets its funds, that it would boycott the chest drive if the L. I. D. lectures were held under the auspices of any Community Chest organization. The neighborhood house capitulated, and the lectures were moved to a hotel. At Chattanooga the morning paper, with local patriotic groups lending aid and comfort, led the attack against the L. I. D. lectures when it was announced they would be held, as in 1934, in a high school. The commissioner of education read, trembled, and withdrew permission. For four years the L. I. D. has had its lecture series in Atlanta and the audience has been interracial and non-segregated as in all other cities. On the afternoon of the day the first lecture was to be given, the financial agent of the Wesleyan Memorial Church called the L. I. D. committee to say that the audience must be segregated at the evening meeting or the police would be called. His explanation was twofold. The Men of Justice, an organization similar to the K. K. K., had told him this must be done, and the church was in the midst of a drive to liquidate a debt of long standing. Powers Hapgood, speaking in Knoxville, Tennessee, on the "March of Labor," was described by the Knoxville *Journal* in a front-page, full streamer headline as "Red on Stage Urges Bloodshed." Immediately the Andrew Johnson Hotel said that no more lectures could be given there. In response to a plea by the L. I. D. committee, the city manager said the meetings could be held in the Market Hall. But pressure from the *Journal* and patriotic groups caused the city council to force the city manager to withdraw his invitation.

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We Must Not Arm Against Japan!

ONE need not be particularly discerning to realize that the Administration's $800,000,000 war budget for 1935-36 is directed specifically against Japan. A glance at the nature of the proposed expenditures is sufficient to confirm this assertion. The bulk of the $200,000,000 which is being asked in excess of the normal budget is to be utilized for the naval-construction program authorized by the Vinson bill. An enlarged navy would only be needed in a conflict with one of two great powers—Great Britain or Japan—and since there has been no period in recent history when cooperation between the two Anglo-Saxon countries has been stronger than at present, it may be assumed that we are concerned solely with our Asiatic rival. Similarly, it is significant that the new army appropriations are to be expended chiefly for airplanes and the strengthening of the defenses of the Pacific Coast. The army also expects to obtain an additional appropriation out of PWA funds for an air base in Hawaii.

Nor is it difficult to understand why certain groups should desire to increase America's fighting strength as a means of restraining Japan. During the past four years the Japanese nation has literally run amuck. It has conquered Manchuria and Jehol by armed force; it has engaged in an undeclared and unprovoked war in Shanghai, and has twice invaded North China; it has increased its own armament expenditures by 130 per cent, and served notice of its refusal to be bound by the Washington naval agreement. If we accept the traditional militarist view that preparedness is the best guaranty of peace, there is reason to assume that an increase of armaments would add to our security against this mad-dog nation. This assumption overlooks the fact, however, that the proposed armament expenditures are not really defensive in character, and are not so regarded abroad. A very small proportion of our naval appropriation is to be spent on ships which are strictly defensive in nature, while the enlargement of our already powerful air fleet clearly suggests a war in which we are the attackers. If self-defense alone were desired, the United States could revise its military and naval policies with a saving of at least half our present war budget. But all our present policies indicate that "defense" is merely a euphemism for the protection of our financial stake in the Far East against Japanese imperial aspirations.

It is evident, therefore, that a suitable defense program must be conditioned by the larger aspects of foreign policy. The chief difficulty in this connection is that the United States has failed to formulate a clear-cut Far Eastern policy to meet the present crisis. We have resented Japanese aggression and sought to preserve the Open Door through non-recognition of the changed status in Manchuria. But rather than face the implications of our position vis-a-vis Japan, we have been content to drift to the very brink of catastrophe. This lack of policy is due largely to our inability to choose among three possible alternatives. In the first place, there are doubtless many groups who would like to see the United States pursue an expansionist course in line with that followed in the past. Since such a program—with its emphasis on the Open Door and the territorial integrity of China—is in direct conflict with Japan's avowed pan-Asiatic policy, it is only logical that we should implement it by strengthening our defenses in the East, fortifying our Pacific possessions, and creating a navy of sufficient size to defeat Japan in its home waters. Obviously this would imply a force far greater than is even now proposed, and, what is more serious, it would inevitably lead to war.

The dangers involved in this course have led a number of observers, liberals and conservatives alike, to favor the second alternative—complete withdrawal from the Far East. If the United States were to abandon the Philippines and the various other Pacific islands, withdraw its military and naval forces from China, and be prepared to take such financial losses as might result from this action, there would appear to be little cause for friction between this country and Japan. In support of this step it may be urged that the whole American investment in the Far East is less than the amount asked for the army and navy in the 1935 budget, while our investments in China and the Philippines combined are less than the sum which General MacArthur is attempting to obtain from the work-relief funds.

Although it is impossible to doubt the sincerity and idealism which motivate many Americans to advocate complete abdication of our position in the East, one must question the practicability of such action. Neither nations nor classes have been known to surrender their vested interests voluntarily. Under the prevailing economic system, surpluses tend inevitably to accumulate, and it is fatal to deny them an outlet. Moreover, there is reason to doubt whether abandonment of the East would actually eliminate the basic causes of international friction. The whole movement toward national isolation merely tends to accentuate the struggle for raw materials and markets which is the basic cause of modern war. To leave China at the mercy of Japan would only strengthen the Japanese Empire in its conflict with the empires of the West.

For those who recoil from the prospect of unbridled Japanese aggression as well as from the specter of war, there remains yet another alternative. By associating itself more fully with the collective systems of security which are developing throughout the world, it is possible for the United States to aid in restraining Japan without setting itself up as the chief opponent of that country's imperialistic aspirations. To make such a policy realistic and effective, it is necessary to recreate a basis of international economic cooperation, which implies an abandonment of our own expansionist policies. This would preclude the possibility of relying on military prowess as a means of gratifying our national ambition, and, like the previous alternative, permit a genuinely defensive military policy.

If the Far Eastern crisis had arisen a few years ago there can be no question which of these alternatives we should have chosen. We should have "followed the flag" without regard for the consequences. But it is difficult to believe that the American people today would countenance

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a war for the protection of American investments if its implications were clearly understood. The danger, however, is not so much that the United States will deliberately choose the first course, but that for lack of constructive statesmanship it will drift into a position where war is inevitable. In the light of prevailing nationalistic passions, passage of the present appropriation bill would be an all but irrevocable step in that direction.

Propaganda and the Schools

AFTER a lively debate in which fundamental questions were raised and discussed, the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association finally passed an innocuous resolution affirming its "unqualified belief in the principle of academic freedom." Prior to the opening of the formal sessions of the Atlantic City convention, a group of the delegates heard some fiery speeches, including one by Charles A. Beard, who denounced the Hearst papers, and adopted a resolution calling upon the government to investigate newspaper propaganda along with the munitions industry. But when the issue came up before the conference itself, that body rather pointedly refrained from any specific mention of the Hearst campaign against allegedly "red" professors in schools and colleges.

Many of the more radical delegates were frankly furious at the failure of the association to take a strong stand, and Heywood Broun, who had been scheduled to address the group, tore up his speech and roundly berated them for their timidity. While we regret the failure to denounce the Hearst activities, which are so plainly directed against the very academic freedom which the association professed to support, we are by no means inclined to count the whole meeting as a failure. The discussions were realistic and outspoken if the official resolution was not, and the issues were clearly defined. Academic freedom in America is, at best, limited and partial in the vast majority of our schools and colleges, but the issue is no longer simply between academic freedom and unofficial control by political or social pressure. At the moment it is rapidly becoming a conflict between two theories of education—the theory which holds that the business of the school is to present facts or arguments as impartially as possible and the theory which insists that its business is to indoctrinate the student with a set of ideas, conservative or radical as the case may be.

Professor Jesse H. Newlon of Teachers College ably presented the case for indoctrination. Admitting that teachers could not offer their pupils any "preconceived blueprint for the new social order," he felt that the teacher was justified in preaching certain broad doctrines and that we must "make our appeal to the rank and file, not to the privileged classes." "We cannot and we will not remain neutral in the struggle of forces going on in this country," he said, and added that the teacher must teach as a certainty that "capitalism is not the solution to the nation's difficulties." Professor Newlon was replied to by Dr. John W. Studebaker, United States Commissioner of Education, who said, "I am against that kind of indoctrination that seeks to impose upon students by the process of propaganda the particular beliefs of the individual instructor," and who added, rather absurdly, that academic freedom meant the freedom to learn, not the freedom to teach.

The Nation, of course, sympathizes with Professor Newlon's desire to see liberal ideas take root in schools. We are also fully aware of the fact that what is called academic freedom too often means no more than a tame conformity. Nevertheless, we would hesitate long before adopting the theory that education should be regarded as a process by which "correct ideas" (even our own) are imparted to students. We are aware how inevitably, in practice, schools organized on that theory harden into the forms they have tended to assume in Germany and Russia alike, where the teacher is compelled to become the mouthpiece of an official dogma and where control from the outside becomes far more complete and far more universally effective than it has ever been even in the United States. We are inclined to hold that education cannot logically be regarded as a process of indoctrination unless one accepts the doctrine that final truth has been discovered and that learning must henceforth be concerned chiefly with the spread and preservation of that truth. So long as one believes that knowledge grows and changes, one must believe that the younger generation has a right to compare and question, and that free inquiry, not indoctrination, is the ideal of education.

The right to such free inquiry in schools and colleges can never be established once and for all. Today it is far more interfered with from the right than from the left, and for the present the fight for academic freedom means primarily the fight for the adequate recognition of the radical position. Nevertheless, the new society will need the critical spirit as much as the old one does, and the conception of free inquiry should not be lost.

A Peace Chapter Ends

THE first comment we have to make on Judge Nields's decision in the Weirton case is that it brings to an ironic end a story of an effort to obtain justice while maintaining industrial peace. The Weirton workers were organized, ready to strike, strong enough at least to have a fair chance of victory. The Wagner board intervened, pledged the men a victory by the more refined process of elections under government protection. Reluctantly the men remained at work and intrusted their future to the still untested value of the New Deal and its enthusiasm for forgotten people. Reviewing the story in its entirety, one sees that the men lost their cause when they remained at work. The Wagner board could do nothing for them since it had no legal backing. The Steel Board, though supported by a weak law, was likewise helpless, as it led them into the delay of a challenge of the law by the employers. And now the judge has told them in effect that in his district they have no hope for economic power unless they fight for it from start to finish. Since we believe in law and in the legal process we can only trust that Congress will see the impossibility of maintaining industrial relations as interpreted by Judge Nields, and will strengthen the law on collective bargaining.

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As to the judge's legal arguments, we are by no means certain that he speaks for other judges of his rank or for the Supreme Court. It is difficult to believe that another court could reconcile their glaring contradictions or sustain their obvious bias. Section 7-a, the learned judge held, is unconstitutional "as applied to the defendant and his business." It is unconstitutional because manufacturing cannot, any more than mining or building, be regarded as "interstate commerce." By so ruling, Judge Nields recurs to the traditionally narrow and literal concept of commerce: it is the physical movement of merchandise from this place to that. This concept, although traditional, is not altogether consistent with the Supreme Court's recent tendency to visualize all business enterprises, except those exclusively local, as participants in a nation-wide "stream," "flow," or "current" of real and money income. Moreover, Judge Nields proves too much. If it is unconstitutional, in view of the interstate-commerce clause, to subject the Weirton Company to collective-bargaining requirements, it must also be unconstitutional to permit the company to avail itself of the "fair-trade" benefits of the iron-and-steel code—basing points, price-fixing, production control, and the like. The court also held that the "relations between employers and employees do not affect interstate commerce." Even in the narrow construction of the term commerce, this position is hardly tenable. The relations between employers and employees can and often do give rise to strikes, lockouts, boycotts, and other obstructions to trade. We have it on the authority of the Supreme Court in such cases that trade unions may be enjoined from restraining "commerce."

Aware of certain legal, if not also logical, difficulties, Judge Nields sought to get around them by proclaiming the community of interest between workers and bosses. The concept that management and labor are separated by "an inevitable and necessary diversity of interests," we are informed, "is an Old World theory" incompatible with the "twentieth-century American theory of mutual interest, understanding, and good-will." Like the theologians who disproved the existence of moons on Saturn by referring to the attributes of Deity, Judge Nields seeks to abolish the class foundations of economic society by judicial pronouncement. At his best he merely parrots the sophistries of apologists for the company union; at his worst he incorporates the sociology of Hitler and Mussolini in American law.

The importance of Judge Nields's decision should not be exaggerated. It is the particular opinion of one district judge on a single specific set of facts. United States district courts in the states of Washington and Virginia have upheld the authority of the labor boards to call for elections pursuant to Section 7-a. United States district courts in the state of Illinois have sustained the validity of the statute in proceedings which arose out of the struggle between the United Mine Workers and the Progressive Miners. The highest courts of Wisconsin, in the Simplex Shoe case, and of New Jersey, in the Bayonne Textile case, have ruled in favor of Section 7-a as a means of establishing employee rights. And we must not forget that the United States Supreme Court, in the famous Texas and New Orleans decision of 1930, disavowed the point of view which Judge Nields now upholds: that it is proper for employers to assist their employees in the choice of representatives for collective bargaining.

Misery in Arkansas

THE misery of the share-cropper has been touched upon in the pages of *The Nation*. We have also pointed out the ironical fact that the crop-reduction program of the AAA, designed to bring prosperity to the agricultural South, has increased the misery of its lowliest inhabitants. We had hoped to have the full story, and some measure of redress, from the AAA itself. It sent Mrs. Mary Myers as an investigator to Marked Tree, Arkansas, when the arrest and conviction of Ward Rodgers for anarchy made spot news of one of the most bitter and long-standing of American class conflicts. We now learn that the AAA has no intention of publishing her report. To be sure, there is no obligation to publish. But by withholding Mrs. Myers's presumably disinterested interpretation of a crucial situation the AAA is giving aid and comfort to the forces of reaction already in full control in Arkansas.

A bill has been passed by the assembly making sedition a felony and defining it in such broad terms that free speech would be a dead letter. Commonwealth College has just been investigated for "un-American and communistic teaching" and is in actual danger of being closed—several of its students and faculty members have been active in connection with the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. At Fort Smith, Horace Bryan has been convicted of anarchy after having led a strike of relief workers, and the Reverend Claude Williams has been sentenced to ninety days for barratry (it means "incitement of litigation"!) in connection with the same strike. Meanwhile if anyone feels that "terror" is too strong a word for what is going on in Arkansas, let him read this paragraph from a letter from Lucien Koch of Commonwealth describing an attempt to hold a share-croppers' union meeting.

> Five men filed into the room, walked toward me, headed by the riding boss. They ordered me to "come along." I refused. They brandished their revolvers, dragged me from the seat, and kicked me from the room. . . . [Two of them] were violently drunk. I was hustled to a car on the road. Bob was too loyal to see me go alone. . . . They poked guns into our faces and bellies, they kicked us, punched us. . . . We were both bloody about the face and head. . . . Rough treatment started again. Drunk deputies stood around and allowed it to go on. Everything must have been planned beforehand. Our lives weren't worth an Indian penny in the hands of those drunken, frothing madmen.

The share-croppers' union, which has some 5,000 members, both black and white, is making a courageous fight against great odds. Meetings are forbidden in many Arkansas towns; Mr. Koch's letter indicates what sort of protection union leaders may expect from Arkansas sheriffs; scores of union members are being evicted and at the same time blacklisted. An appeal to Governor Futrell for temporary refugee camps has been turned down, and Secretary Wallace has refused permission to use government rented land for tent colonies. The share-croppers' union, drawn as it is from one of the most poverty-stricken groups in the country, is utterly without funds. Contributions may be sent to Norman Thomas, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York.

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Issues and Men

Florida Flamboyant

Miami Beach, March 1

IF one were to judge Florida by the appearance of Miami one would have to say that the depression is over in this state. The streets are thronged with the tourists the city must have in order to live, since it has no other trade; the hotels are jammed; the night clubs flourish; there is building everywhere, with lots beginning to go fast; the newspapers are carrying more advertising by one quarter than a year ago; the FERA reports only 4,000 cases (individuals with or without families) on the relief rolls, of whom 1,300 are Negroes and 900 single or widowed women, as against a peak of 16,000 in 1932 and 10,500 in November, 1933. The visitors are spending money freely—before half the horse-racing season was over they had bet $8,000,000 on the "ponies," and there are three dog-racing tracks. True, some of the stores report smaller expenditures per capita than a year ago. But there can be no doubt whatever of the revival of building. Here in Miami Beach homes worth $400,000 and lots valued at $176,000 have changed hands in the past two weeks. The total expenditure for building in the Miami district in 1934 ran well over $8,000,000.

So much on the surface. But all is not so well underneath. Crime is rampant; two days ago men were robbed on the golf links and two caddies were found on the streets of Miami with their skulls fractured. Politics controls the police, so the police testify, as everywhere else, with the result that the men—95 per cent of excellent character, a most competent authority assures me—cannot do their duty; if they were allowed to, my informant says, they could clean up both cities at once. There has been a general disposition to run a "wide-open town" to lure the tourists, and there was open gambling until a few weeks ago, when the evil began to repel the visitors. In consequence, a judge, the chief of police, a state senator, and other high officials have been indicted, but the senator has already been acquitted and there is not much likelihood of other convictions; anybody who wants to can still gamble with impunity. Besides those aided by the FERA, which can only help bona fide residents, there are a number of destitute or near destitute. The transient camp contains an average of 450 men, and every day some fifteen hobos and wanderers are taken to the county line and "shoved over."

Every worker in Miami must report to the police and be finger-printed, and in many occupations must have a police license before he can work. Wages are low and hours long. One woman writes me that she worked for four days in a laundry ironing nine hours a day and was paid $1 a day. It is charged that in the restaurants men and women work twelve hours seven days a week, and the Miami *Herald* carries advertisements for men and boys to work for board and lodging and $1 a week! "There is more slavery in Florida today," writes an old reader of *The Nation*, "than when Lincoln at the instigation of your ancestor freed the slaves." As for Miami, he writes bitterly: "It is the harlot of American cities, and, like many harlots, it is unusually favored by nature."

That it is; nature is exquisite here. But it is not fair to say as this man does that Miami exists merely that rich men may have a place to play. There is far too great a display of wealth for a time like this, but there are also multitudes here, as the public beaches testify, who are far from being rich or even very prosperous. Some day, possibly, the lovely houses one sees will be workers' rest and convalescent homes and there will be "parks of culture and amusement" for the masses. Today one wishes that great tracts could be set aside for the use of the many of inadequate means, so that they could enjoy this health-giving sunshine.

At Palm Beach, too, everything is crowded, most of the great palaces are open, and the hotels have long waiting lists. No stranger could view this town and believe that America is in its most desperate economic plight, with ten or twelve millions out of work and despairing. There are automobiles here from every state in the Union and lovely yachts, too, if not as many as at Miami. One wonders where all this wealth comes from and how it has been preserved—and how much longer it will be possessed by those who now have it. Undoubtedly a good many people are spending all their income in fear of inflation, or because nothing seems safe to invest in. That may have something to do, too, with the demand for houses down here—the desire to put money into something tangible. But Palm Beach, with its gorgeous mansions occupied not over two or three months a year, often only six weeks, will for a long time to come remain a monument to the ruthless piling up of fortunes by the few at the expense of the whole people which marked the recent wicked era of unlicensed and uncontrolled pursuit of wealth. And Florida has just begged and received another $400,000 from Washington for general relief purposes, because it is "broke"!

Elsewhere the state has not fared so well. In the citrus counties the cold weather did great damage. Even the town with the boastful name of Frostproof belied that name and succumbed to temperatures below freezing. Here, too, the transient problem is a serious one. Workers pour in hopeful of fruit-picking jobs and ready to work for hardly more than their food and bed. When the picking is over, some of the communities face serious problems, complicated by the fact that the growers show little disposition to cooperate with one another. There are some cooperative associations, of course. Yet I heard complaints that in towns where everybody ought to be doing well the desire of each man to get ahead of his neighbor has a disintegrating effect. Thus we see again the beneficent working of the private-profit motive!

Oswald Garrison Villard

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Hearst's Russian "Famine"

By LOUIS FISCHER

New York, March 4

I HAVE been reading Thomas Walker's stories in the New York *Evening Journal* and other Hearst newspapers about famine in Soviet Ukraine. These tales and the accompanying photographs are so fantastic and unreal, and so unlike the Soviet Ukraine which I visited in July and August of 1934, that my suspicions were aroused.

Thomas Walker, the editorial note tells us, is a "noted journalist and traveler and student of Russian affairs, who for several years has toured the Union of Soviet Republics." I have never heard of him and I can find no one who has. But let that pass. Mr. Walker, we are informed, "entered Russia last spring," that is, the spring of 1934. He saw famine. He photographed its victims. He got heartrending, first-hand accounts of hunger's ravages. Now famine in Russia is "hot" news. Why did Mr. Walker or Mr. Hearst keep these sensational articles for ten months before printing them? My suspicions grew deeper.

On November 28, 1930, the London *Daily Telegraph* printed a two-column interview with Frank Easton Woodhead, a British engineer "who has just returned from Russia after a visit lasting seven months." On November 11, according to this interview, Mr. Woodhead saw a battle in the barracks square in the center of Moscow between G. P. U. troops and the regular Red Army. The soldiers, he reports, "were butchered by the O. G. P. U. . . . Soon after the firing had ceased I saw several hundred men led out by the O. G. P. U. They were chained together in groups."

On the very next day the ubiquitous Woodhead was in Pushkino, a village near Moscow, where he watched the slaughter of innocent peasants by a Red Army detachment. "It was generally said," he reported, "that the casualties were between four and five hundred. I do not know, but judging by the number of bodies I saw lying about, I should without hesitation accept the estimate."

Three days later, on November 15, food riots broke out in Moscow, Woodhead reported. "In the afternoon we could hear firing from the hotel. It continued from 2:30 to 5. We were told that many people had been killed, and that night, when an American friend and I went to the Opera House, we saw gruesome evidence of what had happened. On the outer edge of the square there were rows of ghastly corpses."

All this, of course, was a tissue of lies. These things could not have happened. I was in Moscow at the time and I investigated Mr. Woodhead at police headquarters, where all foreigners register on entering and leaving the U. S. S. R. I discovered that he had left Moscow on May 8, 1930, for Poland, and had never returned. Mr. Woodhead, therefore, was not in Moscow in November when the bloody events he "saw" are supposed to have taken place.

I published my rebuttal of the *Daily Telegraph* interview in the *New Republic* of June 10, 1931. My article was reprinted in England, and was never denied or contradicted. It could not have been.

On rereading Mr. Thomas Walker in the Hearst press and on thinking over the whole situation, I felt more and more sure that he was another Woodhead, another absentee journalist. And so I consulted Soviet authorities who had official information from Moscow. Thomas Walker was in the Soviet Union once. He received a transit visa from the Soviet consul in London on September 29, 1934. He entered the U. S. S. R. from Poland by train at Negoreloye on October 12, 1934 (not the spring of 1934, as he says). He was in Moscow on the thirteenth. He remained in Moscow from Saturday, the thirteenth, to Thursday, the eighteenth, and then boarded a Trans-Siberian train which brought him to the Soviet-Manchurian frontier on October 25, 1934, his last day on Soviet territory. His train did not pass within several hundred miles of the Black Soil and Ukrainian districts which he "toured" and "saw" and "walked over" and "photographed." It would have been physically impossible for Mr. Walker, in the five days between October 13 and October 18, to cover one-third of the points he "describes" from personal experience. My hypothesis is that he stayed long enough in Moscow to gather from embittered foreigners the Ukrainian "local color" he needed to give his articles the fake verisimilitude they possess.

Mr. Walker's photographs could easily date back to the Volga famine in 1921. Many of them might have been taken outside the Soviet Union. They were taken at different seasons of the year: anybody can see that by looking intently at the vegetation and the clothes of the people. One picture includes trees or shrubs with large leaves. Such leaves could not have grown by the "late spring" of Mr. Walker's alleged visit. Other photographs show winter and early fall backgrounds. Here is the *Journal* of the twenty-seventh. A starving, bloated boy of fifteen calmly poses naked for Mr. Walker. The next minute, in the same village, Mr. Walker photographs a man who is obviously suffering from the cold despite his thick sheepskin overcoat. The weather that spring must have been as unreliable as Mr. Walker to allow nude poses one moment and require furs the next. It would be as easy to riddle Mr. Walker's stories. They do not deserve the effort. The truth is that the Soviet harvest of 1933, including the Soviet Ukraine's harvest, in contrast to that of 1932, was excellent; the grain-tax collections were moderate; and therefore conditions even remotely resembling those Mr. Walker portrays could not have arisen in the spring of 1934, and did not arise.

Why, then, does the Hearst press publish these "revelations"? Mr. Hearst, naturally, does not object if his papers spoil Soviet-American relations and encourage foreign nations with hostile military designs upon the U. S. S. R. But his real target is the American radical movement. These Walker articles are part of Hearst's anti-red campaign. He knows that the great economic progress registered by the Soviet Union since 1929, when the capitalist world dropped into the depression, provides left groups with spiritual encouragement and faith. Mr. Hearst wants to deprive them

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of that encouragement and faith by painting a picture of ruin and death in the U. S. S. R. The attempt is too transparent, and the hands are too unclean to succeed.

P. S. Would the Hearst press oblige us with a photograph of Mr. Thomas Walker, and with facsimiles of his United States passport and of the Soviet visa stamped upon it?

P. S. No. 2. On February 26 the Moscow *Izvestia* printed a lengthy interview with Lindsay Parrott, who had just taken a trip through the Ukraine. He really was in the Ukraine. "Nowhere," says Mr. Parrott, "in any of the cities or villages visited, nor along the road, did I meet any signs of the effects of the famine of which foreign correspondents take delight in writing." He goes on to speak of the "excellent harvest" in 1933. "The progress," he declares, "is indisputable." "In the light of these facts," Mr. Parrott concluded, "I can understand the statement of the local chairman of the district executive committee, Mertz, to the effect that the collective farmers reject the assistance of the fascist organization especially established in Germany to help the Germans allegedly suffering from famine in Russia." The Hearst press in America made a similar appeal for aid for the alleged famine victims. The Hearst organization and the Nazis are beginning to work more and more closely together. But I have not noticed that the Hearst press printed Mr. Parrott's stories about a prosperous Soviet Ukraine. Mr. Parrott is Hearst's correspondent in Moscow.

Collective Bargaining: A Debate

Labor Relations in the Automobile Industry

By LEO WOLMAN

THE Automobile Labor Board exists, under the terms of the settlement of March 29, 1934, by order of the President of the United States. This settlement determines the policy which has guided the board in dealing with discrimination, seniority, and representation. The elections being held under the supervision of the board plainly represent the application of this policy to the issue of labor representation in the industry. The automobile settlement was arrived at after prolonged negotiations in Washington. It is to be assumed that all the parties to the negotiations knew pretty well what the terms of the settlement meant. There is every evidence that they did. The Washington negotiations were clearly a species of collective bargaining and they terminated, as all such negotiations do, in a series of understandings. To say that such understandings have no standing is to cut at the roots of negotiating and bargaining.

At the very beginning the American Federation of Labor asked the assistance of the board in promoting collective bargaining between its representatives and the managements. In all but a few of the plants the unions represented only a minority. The board at the outset directed the managements to bargain with representatives of the union. The membership lists which the unions presented were lists of their members in only a few of the plants in the industry. If the board had at that time limited the right to bargain to representatives of a majority, the organized groups would have been eliminated from all collective bargaining in the industry. Such action would certainly not have been proper, correct under the law, or wise in policy. It was only owing to the form of the President's settlement that the board was able to direct the companies to negotiate with the representatives of the outside unions.

It is clear from conditions in the industry that there can be no collective bargaining without minority representation. No outside unions have a majority. The minorities in the automobile industry do not wish their bargaining to be done for them by other groups. The large preponderance of employees is not ready for the present to commit itself to any organized group at all. To say under these circumstances that any single group should represent them all would be to coerce on a grand scale and would require rules which could not possibly be enforced. The real issue in the automobile industry has not been and is not whether there shall be majority rule but by what means the several minorities should have representation in bargaining with the managements.

Section 7-a of the National Industrial Recovery Act states that "employees shall have the right to organize and to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing." On the primary ballot used by the board there is a space in which the voter may write the name of his candidate for representative, and another space next to it in which he may designate his labor-group affiliation. Both spaces are clearly described on the ballot. In nominating elections, in which this form of ballot is used, roughly 90,000 employees, representing 90 per cent of the eligible voters at work on the day of the election, have to date voted. Contrast this type of election with one recently held by a union. In a big plant of the industry a union which made large claims of membership held an election for the choice of officers to represent the members in bargaining with the management. In this election, although the polls were open all day, it is reported that only sixty persons voted.

To anybody who has watched the vote and studied the results of the elections it is clear that the men understand how to use this kind of ballot. There is every indication that employees who have participated in the vote, and this is by far the largest election of the kind yet held in this country, have cast their ballots soberly and as if they knew what they were doing. Anyone who watches can see that this is so. Returns in some of the election districts and plants where the union or the company union or both are strong show that the results of the election reflect the strength of the various groups. Thus in four districts of several plants in Detroit, an officer of the Detroit Federation of Labor was nominated in two districts and local officers of the bricklayers' and machinists' unions, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, were nominated

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in two others. If these nominees had permitted their names and affiliation to be printed on the final ballots they would in all probability have been elected. Again in another Detroit election both the outside union and the company union polled heavy votes, as the following tabulation shows:

Unaffiliated	1,781
Employees' Association	2,732
Associated Automobile Workers	2,858
American Federation of Labor	33
Mechanics' Educational Society	16
Auto Workers' Union	4
International Workers of the World	1
International Association of Machinists	1
Blank ballots	63
Void ballots	71
Total	7,560

In a plant in Pontiac, Michigan, where a primary election was held on February 22, the outside union, in this case independent of the American Federation of Labor, received more than one-third of the total vote. Obviously where either the outside union or the company union has members, the election machinery of the board permits them to elect their men.

The most important question with respect to the elections is whether they are free and secret elections. The elections are conducted by Francis E. Ross, professor of accounting at the University of Michigan, with an independent organization, under rules promulgated by the board. Mr. Ross and his staff are under emphatic instructions from the board to permit no interference by the management and to insure employees absolute freedom and secrecy in voting. Voters are registered by the election officials. The voters are instructed that they are not required to vote and that they may, if they wish, cast blank ballots. The ballots are counted by the election officials in the presence of representatives of the employees. The statement in *The Nation* (February 27, 1935) that "each ballot has on the corner a number which is supposedly torn off by the election officer, but the men believe that the number is used for identification and that they will be punished if they vote the union ticket," could only have been made by someone not familiar with the election procedure. No one who has seen an election can believe that ballots can be identified.

The departmental representatives and the bargaining committees set up under the plan now in force in the industry can and do carry on effective collective bargaining with the management. The skill and experience of the representatives will in the long run determine how successful negotiation with the companies will be. Differences of opinion exist among representatives of labor under any arrangement. But there is no observable difference in the kind of grievances various representatives present and in the kind of things labor wants and asks for, no matter who its representatives may be. Anybody with practical knowledge knows also that what is done for one group has to be made general and applied to all groups.

Someone has said that free and uncoerced elections held under the supervision of a government board interfere with the development of trade unionism. That system, as shown by the record of the administration of the Automobile Labor Board, does just the opposite. Employees in the automobile industry have the right to vote freely, without fear of reprisal, for anyone they choose to represent them. The representatives so chosen achieve a status in the industry which they never before had. It would be difficult to show developments of equal significance in most other American industries.

The decisions, rulings, and elections of the board have resulted in freeing unions from the fears and difficulties which, in the absence of the President's settlement and the board, they would inevitably have faced in the industry. The right to strike remains unimpaired. The board has issued orders, whenever necessary, putting men back to work and specifying the date on which they are to be returned to their jobs. In the same way the seniority rules, which exist by the terms of the President's automobile settlement, protect employees against the threat of being laid off or being refused a job at the time of rehiring simply because of union membership or union activity. It may be that there are isolated cases, which have not come before the board, in which coercion has been successfully practiced and seniority rules evaded. But by and large in the industry the seniority rules have been properly applied and coercive acts are rare.

Minority groups in the automobile industry, union or non-union, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor or independent of it, have a status which is effectively protected by the prevailing arrangements. The seniority rights of all members of these groups are established. They cannot be discharged through the whim of a foreman, and if they are improperly discharged, the board puts them back. Under the President's settlement the board has the power of review of all discharges. The machinery exists for the free and uninfluenced choice by employees of their representatives and their group affiliation. These are valuable and unprecedented guaranties. They are enforced by a government board. They are the foundation for free and independent representation and collective bargaining.

Is It Collective Bargaining?

By W. M. LEISERSON

THE Automobile Labor Board proposes to create in each automobile plant a "bargaining agency" made up of representatives chosen from "districts" formed by the board by grouping together the employees in a number of the plant departments. This is, of course, an alternative form of organization and representation to that provided by craft unions, industrial unions, or other forms of labor organization. Even if we assume that it is properly designed to carry on collective bargaining, the fact remains that the employees have not chosen it, and have not been afforded an opportunity to vote on whether they approve or disapprove of it, and that it has been imposed upon them by a governmental agency. Yet in the automobile settlement of March 25, 1934, the President announced: "The government makes it clear that it favors no particular union *or particular form of employee organization or representation*" (my italics).

The President also explained Section 7-a in connection with the automobile settlement. The announcement said: "Reduced to plain language, Section 7-a of NIRA means (a) employees have the right to organize into a group or groups; (b) when such group or groups are organized they

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can choose representatives by free choice . . ." Clearly, the employees were to be free to organize any groups or organizations they desired to form, and *after* they had so organized, they could choose authorized agents to represent their organizations in dealing with their employers. Instead of permitting the organizations which the employees themselves formed to vote for their representatives, however, the Automobile Board disregards the employees' groupings and creates new voting "districts."

In District No. 2 of the Chrysler Kercheval Avenue plant, for example, janitors, electricians, carpenters, yardmen, and elevator operators, as well as several other classes of employees, have been put into one group for the purpose of choosing a representative, although men in each craft may want an organization of their own to make a separate bargain with the employer, or may want to combine with others of the same craft employed in various departments and plants to make one bargain covering all of the craft regardless of the plant or department where they may be working.

If Section 7-a were concerned primarily with the right of individual employees to elect representatives for handling complaints, grievances, suggestions, and similar matters affecting individuals or departments, there might be justification for the board's procedure. But what this section of the Recovery Act attempts to establish is "the right to organize and to bargain collectively." The choice of representatives is merely an incident of this right. By centering its attention and activities on the nomination and election of representatives, the board is really denying to the employees the right to organize and to bargain collectively.

Section 7-a is not as ambiguous as it has been made to appear. The National Labor Board, the National Labor Relations Board, the Petroleum Labor Policy Board, and the National Steel Labor Board have all been in agreement as to its meaning. They have all held that it authorized employees to bind themselves by a majority vote to act as a unit and thus place the representatives of their unincorporated associations on the same basis for bargaining purposes as are the representatives of the corporations that employ them. This is the essence of the "right to organize and bargain collectively" which the section aims to protect. In the Railway Labor Act, where the same right is guaranteed in the same words, the intent is specifically spelled out in several explanatory sections; but while it is to be hoped that Congress will clarify Section 7-a as is done in the Railway Labor Act, in the absence of such action it hardly seems reasonable to assume that the right itself is anything different under the Recovery Act from what it is under the Railway Labor Act.

The right to organize means that once employees have formed or joined a group or association they may authorize their organization to represent them through its duly chosen officers and agents in dealing with the similarly chosen officers and agents of the employing corporations. If the term "representative" as used in Section 7-a is to be interpreted as meaning individuals only, as the Automobile Board's ballots indicate, then the purpose of forming labor organizations is defeated. I have found no responsible lawyer who believed that the courts would interpret the word "representative" in this narrow sense. Departing from the practice of the other boards, the Automobile Labor Board did not permit the names of the various employees' organizations to be placed on the ballots to be voted for as representatives. Nevertheless, the board has published figures claiming to show affiliations or lack of affiliations with labor organizations. These are based on the mere statements of some voters, who in nominating individuals wrote in opposite the names the affiliations of these nominees with any "labor group." Those who were asked to indicate the affiliations may not have known them, and it is certain that many refused to reveal affiliations. Under the circumstances the publication of alleged affiliations, without explaining that organizations could not be voted for, hardly tells the whole truth.

Like the right to organize, the right to bargain collectively also seems likely to be frustrated by the procedure adopted by the Automobile Labor Board. Collective bargaining as an economic process has a well-defined meaning, the basis of which is cooperative marketing of labor. Its purpose is to substitute one collective agreement covering terms and conditions of employment for the individual bargains made by the employer with each employee. If the employees are to bargain for a whole group and make one cooperative employment contract covering them all, they must have a common sales agency, just as agricultural cooperatives provide sales agents for the cooperating farmers. When, therefore, Section 7-a says that "employees shall have the right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing," it can mean only cooperative bargaining of employees through the sales or business agents employed by their organizations. But while free themselves to employ specialized personnel managers as their representatives in dealing with labor, employers object to the agents of wage-earners as "outsiders" and "agitators."

Until the law made it clear that employees had as much right to use outside expert service and skill as the employer had, the latter, whenever he could, simply refused to deal with anyone who was not his employee. Now that this position can no longer be legally maintained, the same end is sought by securing the election of labor representatives who are already bound by individual contracts with the employer from whom they are to try to win a collective contract. This makes it possible for employers to discipline, transfer, discharge, or otherwise punish or remove the bargaining agents of the employees, and makes collective bargaining about as effective as salesmanship would be if the customers had similar powers over the sales agents of those with goods to sell.

The election of representatives by "districts" within the automobile plants makes effective collective bargaining impossible, because the employees are constrained to use a "bargaining agency" made up of representatives who are subject to the control and direction of the employer, untrained in the art of negotiation, and unable to devote all or a major portion of their time to the business of the employees, and each of whom is responsible to a separate and independent constituency. Pitted against them for bargaining purposes are expert negotiators appointed by a unified management and acting under a single directing authority. It seems to be commonly overlooked that if employees are to negotiate and make bargains collectively they too must be in a position to act as a unit through their unincorporated associations and be subject to an undivided executive control.

In collective labor contracts there cannot be two or more rates of pay, sets of working hours, or working rules for the same class of work. The agreement must establish wage and other terms for all who perform the same kind of

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services; and if more than one kind of work is to be covered, the labor must be classified and graded, so that the terms and conditions applicable to each grade are clearly understood and specifically written out. Proportional representation, however, implies that the representatives of one group of tool makers, for example, may bargain for a dollar and a quarter an hour with a work week of thirty-six hours, while another may want a dollar an hour for a forty-hour week. Such differences are of course bound to appear, but whereas on the management side they will have been resolved into one offer that the employer is willing to make, the employees are asked to come into their "bargaining agency" with all their differences unsettled. This is the reason why the proportional-representation rule is impossible in collective bargaining, and why Congress in the Railway Labor Act specifically provides that "a majority of any craft or class of employees shall have the right to determine who shall be the representative of the craft or class . . .," and why most of the labor boards have taken the same position.

Individuals and minorities are nevertheless protected. They may, under the Railway Labor Act and under the decisions of the boards, handle their own grievances with their employers or designate any representatives they choose for this purpose. But they may not make separate contracts or undermine the terms and conditions of employment negotiated and agreed upon by the majority to govern collectively the whole class of employees to which they belong.

Mr. Wolman's Rebuttal

THE President's automobile settlement states: "In all the hectic experience of NRA I have not seen more earnest and patriotic devotion than has been shown by both employers and employees in the automotive industry. They sat night and day for nearly two weeks without a single faltering." From this it would appear that the terms of the settlement were the subject of prolonged discussion, debate, and negotiation. The President states that the "settlement has been offered by me to, and has been accepted by, the representatives of the employees and the employers." This means that the terms of the settlement were accepted by the two parties. The settlement again states: "It is my hope that this system may develop into a kind of works council in industry in which all groups of employees, whatever may be their choice of organization or form of representation, may participate in joint conferences with their employers . . ." This means proportional representation.

With respect to what people did or did not understand, and did or did not intend, the chronology of events is illuminating. The board took office on March 29, 1934, at the peak of the season. Soon thereafter lay-offs began. The board issued its order of elections on December 7, 1934, at the beginning of the period of rehiring for the next season of production. The first formal withdrawal by the American Federation of Labor was dated September 11, 1934. Informal representations to the same effect were made long before that. There must, then, clearly have been some other reason for withdrawal and it must have antedated the notice of elections by a considerable period.

The question is again, do the elections do what they purport to do? The employees in the industry have voted. Through February 28, 1935, 89,273 employees, representing 91 per cent of the eligible voters working on the days of the nominating elections, voted. Compared to other elections in industry and to elections for public officials, these figures indicate a low rate of abstention. Employees to the number of 19,041, or 21 per cent of those voting, wrote in affiliations with one labor organization or another. This number cannot, in the accepted use of the term, be described as a "few voters." If those who abstained from voting did so on instructions, it would have been just as easy to instruct them to vote and to write in the appropriate affiliations.

The election districts are determined by conference between the election officials and representatives of the employees. All organized groups are invited to send representatives to confer on the districting in each factory. The board itself does not pass on the election districts unless the matter is brought before it on appeal from the decision of the election officials. There have been hardly any disputes concerning the districts. If any group, such as "janitors, electricians, carpenters, yardmen, and elevator operators," desires to bargain directly with the management through whatever representatives it chooses, it may under the board's rules do so.

Employees in the automobile industry have been instructed by the board and by its agents that they may nominate anyone whether or not he works in the district, plant, or industry. Outsiders have been elected and are serving as representatives. Outsiders have been nominated and could have been elected if they had chosen to run. Outsiders who have not been elected under the board's plan are negotiating and bargaining with the companies throughout the industry. The right of employees in the industry to organize is protected by the board. The rights of elected representatives are protected by the rules of the board as to seniority, by its authority to review cases of discrimination and discharge, and by the decisions it has so far made.

Mr. Leiserson's Rebuttal

THE integrity of the vote as taken in the automobile plants is not to be questioned. It is the form of the ballot and the organization for election and bargaining on which the voting was predicated that is under attack. Unquestionably, also, the policy of the Automobile Labor Board must be determined by the President's settlement and by Section 7-a of the Recovery Act. Neither of these, however, authorizes the board to organize the employees or to create the kind of organization for collective bargaining that it considers proper, correct, or wise.

If it is true that "the large preponderance of employees is not ready to commit itself to any organized group at all," then of course they want no collective bargaining, but prefer to continue on an individual bargaining basis. There is no more authority in the board to organize them into "districts" and "bargaining agencies" than there is to organize them into locals of trade unions or into company unions.

It is no justification to say that "if the board had . . . limited the right to bargain to representatives of a majority, the organized groups would have been eliminated from all collective bargaining in the industry." Employees' organizations, whether affiliated with the American Federation of Labor or not, if they command no majority for bargaining

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purposes, have no right either in law or justice to get a collective contract. The majority in each plant whom the board reports as "unaffiliated" has the right not to organize and not to bargain collectively.

But the board's friendly intention to promote collective bargaining among the "unaffiliated" who do not want it actually works out in practice to prevent the employees in those plants, departments, and crafts where they have organized and command a majority from getting the collective bargaining they are entitled to. The Automobile Labor Board has no mandate either from the Recovery Act or the President's settlement to organize the whole automobile industry for collective bargaining, or for its substitute for collective bargaining. If it would hold elections only in plants where groups have organized and where representation disputes arise, and leave the other plants alone until a party to such dispute requests its services, it would protect the rights of those who want to organize and also of those who do not. This is the view most of the labor boards have taken, and it is the view embodied in the Railway Labor Act.

What Price Truth and Purity?

Washington, March 4

NOTHING illustrates better the subtle rationalization required by modern life than a public hearing on a bill for purity in food and drugs and for truth in advertising them. If anyone opposes the bill be appears to advocate impurity and deceit. That may be what he wants to do. But it is not what he can afford to admit. What he must demonstrate is that there are gradations of both truth and purity. If some untruths and some impurities do not hurt the public, he can say he wants to be free just so long as he does not harm anybody. But even this is not a happy way of stating his case. It is still better to accept truth and purity, and make the law more difficult to enforce.

The public hearing on S-5, the Copeland bill, held Saturday, was a revelation of the possibilities of deviousness. Only one of the opponents was forthright, Clinton S. Robb, representing the United Medicine Manufacturers of America. And he dared to be because he felt that the bill outraged the right of self-medication. Here is one of the liberties of which apparently not enough has been heard. The whole purpose of the bill, said Mr. Robb, was to take it away. He wanted a board of review to pass on the administration of the law by the Department of Agriculture. There should be no doctors on the board, and the medical viewpoint should not prevail. Mr. Robb was quite frank about it, on a day when candor was at a premium. The right of every man to be his own doctor and to be fooled by patent medicines is an item in the catalogue of freedom too often overlooked. Mr. Robb neither hid his self-interest nor evaded any issues in defending it.

But the hearing, as whole, was devoid of much withering frankness. A great deal of the talk was on the question whether the control of advertising should be by the Federal Trade Commission or by the Department of Agriculture. This is an ideal subterfuge. It does not appear to impinge at all on the principles of purity and truth. It looks like a mere administrative problem. But the issue is one of great importance. The practice of the Federal Trade Commission in enforcing the law is already laid down. When there has been a violation the commission issues a "cease and desist" order, and it does not penalize until this order has been disobeyed. A manufacturer of patent medicines may make some nostrum which breaks the law; he can sail ahead until he is caught up in an investigation; there is an inquiry, and then at last the cease-and-desist order. All he needs to do is to dissolve his company and start anew under another name. But if he is prosecuted by the Department of Agriculture he is punished for breaking the law. He is not given a head start in a race from justice which can be prolonged indefinitely. In the House of Representatives a bill drawn up by Congressman Mead leaves the enforcement with the Federal Trade Commission, and this is what the patent-medicine interests want.

A most engaging witness before the Senate committee was Charles Wesley Dunn, appearing for manufacturers of food, for the pharmaceutical manufacturers, and for the makers of dog food. Evidently he is quite a personage, for he told the committee, after reeling off the groups he represented, that he also represented himself. Mr. Dunn was opposed to the so-called Tugwell bill of last year, but gave the committee to understand that he was all in favor of the present one. But he had amendments to propose. One of these illustrates how it is possible to favor truth and purity and yet make the law harder to enforce. This amendment would require the department to supply to the maker a sample that is to be tested, and inform him of the technique of the test to be applied. Nothing could appear more harmless. But suppose for a moment that the department finds on the market a dangerous patent medicine, full of poison, which is a peril to life and health. And suppose the department cannot trace the manufacturer? Under this amendment it cannot prosecute the criminal company until it has gone through this genteel business of supplying it with a sample of its poisonous product and telling how it is to be analyzed. It cannot get out a warrant, have a search made for the manufacturer, and hale him into court. There is another difficulty in that standard methods of analysis are not yet known for everything. Chemists must experiment. And by this amendment they cannot prosecute on findings made by a technique which is not described in advance to the manufacturer. But Charles Wesley Dunn was, of course, indorsing the bill.

In the light of Mr. Dunn's service of truth and purity it is interesting to report on the testimony of representatives of advertising. Charles Coolidge Parlin (Curtis Publishing Company) was on hand for the National Publishers' Association, representing 227 magazines and periodicals and 50,000,000 readers. Mr. Parlin yields to no one, he announced, in defending the rights of readers. He is all for truth and purity. He had nothing to say against the bill. In fact he had urged his members not to oppose it. But he asked for fair consideration for the amendments put forward, that was all. He favored the bill as it stood, but he hoped

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the committee would give this fair consideration. The same unctuous formula was used by Alfred T. Falk of the Advertising Federation of America, which favors the Copeland bill with or without the "constructive" amendments proposed by the manufacturers. One need not criticize these gentlemen. They derive their existence from the conflicting patronage of public and manufacturers. Readers, of course, should have unamended truth and purity. Manufacturers, however, award advertising contracts. The publishers and advertisers successfully served both their masters simultaneously, and not without a certain dignity. Mr. Parlin, in fact, was quite impressive.

William P. Jacobs, for the United Medicine Manufacturers, was one of those who wanted to leave enforcement with the Federal Trade Commission. But he, like most of the medicine makers, was "in principle heartily in favor of the bill." He did say, however, that one of the effects of legislation was that it was leading to a reduction in the claims of the therapeutic value of advertised medicines. And as the claims were reduced, advertising became more difficult to understand, which he considered deplorable.

Another witness was a familiar figure in the pure-drug fight—Lee Bristol, of Bristol-Myers (pink toothbrush), a former president of the Association of National Advertisers. Mr. Bristol wants, he said, to see legislation, but he wants it to be fair. What he favors is the provision (now in the Mead bill) which authorizes a "harmless trade claim," that is, one made in exuberance by a manufacturer; and so long as it does not deceive and does not jeopardize public health, Mr. Bristol would like it permitted by the law. Obviously the inclusion of such language in a bill would make it harder to obtain accuracy in advertising. Hugo Mock, for the cosmetic manufacturers, stressed the same point but he was the most downright of the "interests" in supporting the bill; he did not wince at having the Department of Agriculture instead of the Federal Trade Commission enforce it, and he voiced bravely the opinion that a constructive law cannot hurt the legitimate manufacturer.

Harry A. Bellows, of the National Association of Broadcasters, was not quite so unctuous as the publishers and advertisers. He frankly objected to having broadcasting put under still another legal control. And he helpfully made suggestions intended to ease matters for the advertisers.

A diverting forty minutes of the hearing was taken up by Arthur Kallet, one of the authors of "A Hundred Million Guinea Pigs" and representative of Consumers' Research, Inc. Mr. Kallet thinks the bill does not go nearly far enough—does not bar enough advertising or give specific enough controls. He said it should not be enforced by the Department of Agriculture, which is dedicated to the producer rather than the consumer. Curiously enough, when he tried to inject some personal remarks about Senator Copeland, he was promptly shut off. He did succeed in saying that last year the Senator had made a broadcast sponsored by Eno's Salts; this was promptly and testily expunged from the records. And as Mr. Kallet showed signs of becoming obstreperous, Senator Clark noisily threatened to have him thrown out of the hall. It was plain that Mr. Kallet, though an unmincing believer in utter purity and truth, was *persona non grata* with the committee.

A still more convincing proponent of truth and purity was Robert L. Fischeles, of the American Pharmaceutical Association. He wanted the bill strengthened, he approved of having all ingredients and formulas and all the ingredients of secret formulas on the label so as to allow intelligent self-medication. He pointed out the anomaly of letting the patent-medicine manufacturer advertise by commercial methods while competing with the doctor who cannot. And he was all for taking the advertising control from the Federal Trade Commission, since food and drugs, he said, are not ordinary commodities in trade.

The present bill is weaker than the so-called Tugwell bill of last year. It has been made acceptable to food manufacturers by omitting graded standards and requiring only the observance of a single minimum standard. But this is for all foods, whereas the present law covers only canned foods. It does not provide for voluntary inspection. But it does contain most of the other valuable provisions of the previous bill, and if it passes it will make a notable advance toward the attainment of truth and purity. R. G. S.

Social Insurance in the Soviet Union

By KATHLEEN BARNES

BESIDE the Moskva River stands a large, imposing building. Inside, numerous dark and narrow corridors give it the appearance of a rabbit warren. In Czarist times it was a home for foundlings. Unwanted children were abandoned at its gate. Now, under the red flag, it is the Palace of Labor, headquarters of the trade unions, and consequently the directing center of Soviet social insurance. But social insurance in the Soviet Union is no foundling. On the contrary, it is fashioned of the blood and bone of the revolution itself; its growth has been an integral part of the development of the Soviet state.

In the revolution of 1905 social insurance was one of the demands of the insurgent workers. Driven by fear of the rebellion, the government hastily drafted a commission to prepare a series of insurance laws. With the collapse of the revolution, however, and during the period of reaction which followed, this work was allowed to drift. Not until 1912, when the tide of revolt was once more rising, were the first real insurance laws hurried through the Duma.

In the same year, at the Prague conference of the Bolshevik Party, Lenin put into concrete form the workers' insurance program: security for all those who work for hire in every eventuality of being unable to work; compensation to the full amount of wages; contributions to social-insurance funds from the employers and the government; complete control of the system in the hands of the insured. The workers were warned that under a capitalist system such social insurance as they would achieve would be granted by the government as a palliative measure, as a sop to their demands for a better life, as a deterrent to the revolution.

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They were urged, however, not to boycott such insurance as was granted them but to use it as a means for organizing their strength.

After the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks in 1917 a series of social-insurance laws embodying the principles of the workers' program rapidly appeared on the statute books. The principle that the workers of a state have the right to protection against any contingency which may deprive them of their earning power is an integral part of Bolshevik doctrine. Furthermore, social security is not only an end-objective of the Soviet system; it is also one of the tools of revolution. It is used as an incentive, as a lever of considerable power in the construction of a new people and a new world. It has changed, therefore, in both form and content as the line of the Communist Party has changed. But within the changing picture some things have remained constant. For example, the workers have never been forced to assume any share of the cost of social insurance. From the very beginning the cost has been borne by the employer. During the period of military communism, when the state assumed the role of employer for all the population, the state took over the financing of the security measures. But with the coming of the NEP and the reappearance of private enterprise, each employer was obliged to pay as dues to the social-insurance funds a definite percentage of the amount he paid in wages. Since 1928 private enterprise has disappeared, but the payments for social insurance are still made by the individual concern or by the employer of a servant or domestic laborer.

Another constant has been the administration of the security measures by the workers themselves. Until 1933 social insurance belonged in the province of either the Commissariat of Labor or the Commissariat of Social Security, but in either case no representative of the employers had any hand in the administration. Moreover, a rather large measure of control has always been awarded to the trade unions, the organizations most clearly representing the insured persons. This control was made complete in 1933, when the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions assumed the functions of the Commissariat of Labor and took over the administration of social insurance.

There has been little variation in the types of insecurity against which the workers have been insured. At first the disability of old age was only provided for in so far as it deprived an individual of his ability to work, but by 1929 old-age pensions based upon a definite age level had been introduced for the workers in all the leading branches of the national economy. Unemployment insurance, on the other hand, was part of the system at first but disappeared in 1930, when the demand for labor rendered insurance against this particular hazard of a worker's life unnecessary.

If an insured person becomes ill he receives aid and free medical care, and stands no risk of losing his job. The maternity hazard receives the same treatment. Absence from work on account of quarantine or the necessity of caring for a sick member of the family likewise entitles an insured person to aid and does not render him liable to be discharged. Benefits begin with the first day of absence and continue to the last or until such time as invalidism is established. After that the compensation is governed by the pension laws, whether invalidism is the result of industrial accident, professional disease, or general illness. As long as unemployment existed, the unemployed received aid and free medical care. Families deprived of their bread-winner, whether by death or disappearance, receive support if the bread-winner has been an insured member of society. In addition, the families of the insured are eligible for free medical care, and like the insured have their burial expenses paid. Supplementary aid is given to insured women and to the wives of insured men upon the birth of a child and during the first nine months of the infant's life.

If it is asked, however, to whom is this security extended, the picture is not so constant. The provisions have varied as the economic system has changed. Immediately after the revolution the laws were defined as applying to all who worked for hire, peasant or proletariat, with the additional provision that arrangements were to be worked out whereby members of cooperative enterprises or individual poor peasants could insure themselves. During the period of military communism the circle of the insured was expanded to cover all members of the state who did not exploit the labor of others. But when the NEP was established, the laws were again restricted to cover only those who worked for hire and so they remain at the present time.

At the beginning of NEP the most urgent need of the Soviet state was to start the wheels of industry, to light the furnaces that would again send smoke pouring out of the factory chimneys. For this it was necessary to attract the workers back to the deserted mills. Restriction of social insurance to those who work for hire was but one example of its use as a lever in the reconstruction of the country. The objective was achieved. The 6,700,000 wage workers of 1923 grew to 10,500,000 in 1928, and since then, under the stimulus of the five-year plans, their number has more than doubled. The number of insured has of course also increased and to an even greater extent. As late as 1923 only 78 per cent of the workers were insured. Gradually, however, the machinery of social insurance has become more effective until at the present time the number of the insured is practically 100 per cent of those who theoretically come under the provisions of the law.

It is when we analyze the amount of aid and pensions as determined by the laws and the actual carrying out of these provisions that we find most fluctuation. For years after their adoption, the decrees could not be carried into effect. Civil war, intervention, famine were completing what the World War had begun, the destruction of the resources of the country. The people in the cities lived largely on black bread. The soldiers of the Red Army marched with a greatcoat as the only covering for their underwear. The ruble lost all value. In such a time the bestowal of aid and pensions in money had very little significance, and the principle of natural forms of aid was established.

Again with NEP came a change. The monetary system was stabilized. Payments in kind disappeared. But although the industrial development of the country has been steady ever since then, the finances of social insurance were in a difficult position for many years. Employers, both private and governmental, were often remiss in payment of their dues. It was impossible to build up an adequate reserve of insurance funds, and several times the end of the year showed a deficit. Thus hampered, the government found it impossible to establish pensions and unemployment

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relief at an ideal level. Even the law concerning aid for temporary disability, which up to 1932 was fixed at 100 per cent of salary, had to be qualified by a provision enabling the authorities to diminish it to two-thirds of the amount of the wages when the social-insurance funds were inadequate. The actual financial aid to the insured person was supplemented, however, by additional help to the family, by the practical elimination of rent, by free medical care, and by various other forms of direct aid.

The most striking evidence of the way in which social insurance has been utilized to mobilize the forces of the country in support of the party program is the development of the system since 1931. In order to carry out the program of industrialization embodied in the Five-Year Plan it was necessary to use every incentive to obtain good workmanship, low labor turnover, and effective labor cadres. The section of the population that was most valuable for the fulfilment of the plan was henceforth to be the section which received most favored treatment in every aspect of life. Social insurance was made to conform to this principle. The laws enacted since then have made pensions and aid dependent on the type of work that the recipient has been doing and on the length of time he has been working, both generally and in a given enterprise. To be a member of a shock brigade carries certain benefits and not to be a member of a trade union entails distinct disadvantages. Aid for temporary disability may be 100 per cent of the wage or as low as 50 per cent. Pensions for invalidism are further complicated by the question whether invalidism results from professional accident, professional disease, or from general illness. Invalids, moreover, are grouped into three categories according to the extent of their disabilities. The pension may be equal to 100 per cent of the wage for a worker who is totally disabled and requires someone to take care of him, or it may be as low as 33 per cent of the wage for a worker who is incapacitated only partially as the result of general illness or who has done less important work. Pensions for old age may not be lower than 50 per cent of the former wage.

A comparison of the 1934 budget with those of earlier years reveals other evidences of how social insurance mirrors the economic condition of the country and the purposes of the party. In the nine years from 1925 to 1934 the total figure of the budget has grown from 474,200,000 to 5,050,000,000 rubles. The change in the character of the expenditures is also striking. In 1925 practically all expenditures were in the form of direct aid and pensions. Very little was spent for social service or preventive measures. As funds have increased, however, increasing amounts have been set aside for rest homes, sanitariums, crèches, kindergartens, milk kitchens, special diet feeding, meals for school children, and housing. In 1934 this type of expenditure far outweighed expenditure for pensions and direct aid. In furnishing this indirect aid, however, as in everything else, preference is given to the most valuable section of society.

In this description of Soviet social insurance it should be mentioned that the large numbers of the population engaged in agriculture are not entirely neglected even though they are not wage-earners. Workers on a state farm of course come under the provisions of the social-insurance laws, and for those not so covered there is legislation directing the formation of mutual-aid societies.

The Soviet system of social insurance contains many faults, inevitable in anything so large, but it is extremely interesting as the achievement of a workers' state. It differs from social insurance in other countries in being not a bandage applied to the system externally but part of the warp and woof of the fabric of the state.

[*This is the third of a series of articles on the social-security systems of various countries.*]

In the Driftway

INSPIRED by the latest imminent war, a number of horrendous tales have lately reached the Drifter's ears about Ethiopia. The strategy of the wily Ethiopians, so it is said, will be to entice Mussolini's troops into their strange jungle country, and then, when the Italians have been weakened by the attacks of fearsome insects and hooded serpents, to finish them off by poisonous arrows shot from the trees. Now the Drifter frankly confesses that he has never been to Ethiopia, and beyond remembering that the Ethiopian is famous in Biblical literature for being unable to change his skin—this distinguishes him, no doubt, from the rest of mankind—his knowledge of that far-away country was exceedingly limited. To the source books he went, accordingly, with the following results.

* * * * *

ETHIOPIA, it seems, is—or was once—located in northeastern Africa, and although that section of the world seems not incredibly remote today, in the Homeric poems the Aethiopes were the furthest of mankind, both eastward and westward; in their country, indeed, the sun probably set. The object of considerable interest to the Greeks—who called them "long-lived," fish-eaters," and "troglodytes"—and subject to heavy tribute by the Egyptian kings, the Ethiopians became independent about a thousand years before Christ. After a millennium of varying fortunes, during which for a period the country was ruled by queens named Candace, Ethiopia suffered the current lot and became more or less a conquest of Rome, although it is said that the Emperor Augustus ordered the evacuation of the country without demanding tribute (contemporary Roman papers please copy). The subsequent history of Ethiopia is full of conquests, defeats, splendid dynasties, and the founding and destruction of cities. Until the beginning of the Christian era the history of the country was closely associated with that of Egypt. During the last thousand years it has apparently been swallowed up bodily by Abyssinia.

* * * * *

THE Drifter pauses to take a breath and to admit that he is becoming confused. For it appears, in all the reference books he has handy, that Ethiopia is an "ancient classical" country, and only Abyssinia exists today, of which the capital is Addis Ababa. Abyssinia, of which we were not speaking at all, is partly low and tropical and partly mountainous; the flora and fauna are highly varied, ranging—as far as the latter is concerned—from the ant to the elephant. There are a few serpents, but nowhere does the Drifter see the inhabitants described as likely to climb trees and shoot poisoned arrows.

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FOR Signor Mussolini's benefit, therefore, the Drifter offers some sound advice, based on geographical and historical research. There is no such country as Ethiopia. To make plans for conquering it would involve going backward about a thousand years in time, obviously the wrong direction for a Duce to take. And even if he succeeded in reincarnating himself and his army, he would find his new conquest hardly noticed in a land that had been in a state of conquering or being conquered for several thousand years. It is alleged—but the Drifter does not vouch for the truth of it or of anything else on the subject—that precious metals are drawing the attention of Rome to Addis Ababa (whatever that city is the capital of). Obviously this is just another gold-mine pipe-dream, no more to be believed than that Ethiopia exists. In short, Signor Mussolini, you'd better decide to stay home and mind your own business. With kind regards from

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Mr. Adamic's Detroit

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Louis Adamic's central thesis in his article on the automobile industry is that there will be no upheaval. He may be right, but the odds are two to one with few takers that there will be a strike. As for the hill-billies, this importation is not a 1935 trick—it was extensively used throughout the twenties. Right now Detroit is having a sort of Old Home Week for production workers who scatter to Tennessee and Missouri when there is no work for them here. As for Adamic's welfare figures, although employment may have doubled over the dead period immediately preceding the rise, it has certainly not gone much more than 20 per cent over the 1934 high.

To speak of the A. F. of L. campaign as "only a lot of empty motions" is to do rank injustice to the hundreds of hard-working volunteer organizers in the shops. "The only important plant which is effectively organized is the Auto-Lite in Toledo," says Mr. Adamic. How about the 100 per cent strike at Kelsey-Hayes, the successful strike at Motor Products, demands won at Motor Metals, and so on? Mr. Adamic apparently has the usual intellectual prejudice against the A. F. of L. Speaking of A. F. of L. men "taxiing about the town" is part of this attitude.

Mr. Adamic says that the Mechanics' Educational Society of America is only concerned with tool-and-die makers, the aristocrats of automobile labor. This sneer about aristocrats is neither original nor justified. The leaders of the M. E. S. A. all subscribe to a fervent belief in industrial unionism. They know that the basis of any industrial union in the automobile industry must be the skilled workers, because these workers at least stay in the plants for an average of five months a year. Moreover, numbers are not everything in any industry. The M. E. S. A. in conjunction with the Society of Designing Engineers, another independent, can easily stop the industry any time the feeling to do so can be developed in their respective memberships. Should such feeling mature, one can visualize the almost complete organization of the industry in a couple of weeks. During the tool-and-die strike in the fall of 1933 the M. E. S. A. enrolled thousands of members, men who struck first and became organized afterwards. Should an agreement on immediate objectives be possible among the A. F. of L. federal unions, the M. E. S. A., and the Designing Engineers, and should this agreement receive the support of the conflicting guides to the economic paradise belonging to the various political groups, the automobile industry would become a closed-shop industry in 1935. As it is, what with so many conflicting saviors showing him the only path to economic salvation, it is no wonder the worker joins a company union or decides to go to hell with the Wolman board elections.

These casual surveys by professional analyzers are all too common. They remind one of the generalization of the numerous visitors to Soviet Russia who spend five days studying the Five-Year Plan and then write a five-hundred-page volume of advice to Stalin.

Detroit, Mich., February 26 MATTHEW SMITH,
General Secretary, M. E. S. A.
SAMUEL ROMER,
Managing Editor of the M. E. S. A. *Voice*

More Amusing than Accurate

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Your sports writer is more amusing than accurate in his piece on making America's gods. Certainly he is in error stating that Robert Harron and myself have been unemployed since the *Evening Post* changed hands, for Mr. Harron has been profitably employed doing promotion work for rugby football, and I have been one of Mr. Hearst's minions (not millions).

Quebec, February 25 JOHN R. TUNIS

Replying to Mr. Sifton

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

In the issue of *The Nation* for February 27 Mr. Paul Sifton vigorously, if somewhat rashly, contradicts many of the statements made concerning the Theater Guild in the editorial, Picketing Playwrights, published in the issue of February 6. His statement that during the past eight seasons the Guild has produced twenty-three, not twenty-seven, American plays is not important, but a count which I have made for myself gives twenty-seven as the correct number.

What is important is his statement that during the same eight years the Guild "introduced for the first time to a New York audience" only three playwrights. So far as I know, the following had never had theatrical productions of any kind: S. N. Behrman, DuBose and Dorothy Heyward, Bruce Gould and Beatrice Blackmar, George O'Neil, and Arthur Guiterman. This makes seven, and I think one may fairly add Mr. Sifton himself, whose only previous New York production was a non-professional one.

If Mr. Sifton insists that anyone who has had even a non-professional production in New York cannot be called "a new playwright," then by what possible logic does he assume that the Guild would be aiding new playwrights if it produced his own latest work? By his own standards he is an established dramatist with at least two New York productions and to produce another of his plays would be only to follow in that safe and sane road which he accuses the Guild of following.

As a matter of record it is worth while to add also that among other dramatists produced by the Guild during the eight seasons under discussion were Lynn Riggs, whose only previously produced play ran for eleven nights, and Dawn Powell, whose only previous play had been a failure. If neither of these was strictly speaking a "new playwright," it can hardly be said that their plays were accepted because of any previous success.

New York, March 4 JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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Labor and Industry

Red-Baiters' Holiday in Sacramento
The Criminal-Syndicalism Trial

By TRAVERS CLEMENT

Sacramento, February 27

FOR three months the State of California has been conducting its biggest and best criminal-syndicalism trial since the post-war hysterics of 1919-20. A few blocks away from the courtroom where the performance is taking place is the state Capitol building where California's drastic criminal-syndicalism law was passed fourteen years ago, and where new and even more drastic repressive measures against labor and radicalism have been recently introduced. Like the trial itself they are ostensibly the fruit of last summer's general strike and the wave of vigilante terror which followed it. Actually, like the trial, they are part of a program which has been maturing for the past two or three years, and which, if successful, will reduce the entire state to the political level of its most benighted section—the vigilante-ruled Imperial Valley.

The criminal-syndicalism trial began early in November. (All but two of the prisoners had been in jail since July.) The state rested its case early in February. During each day of that period—except when the Hauptmann affair usurped all space but the sport pages and the comic sections—newspapers throughout the state featured the case, filling their news and editorial columns with lurid stories of "threats" to jurors, red marches on Sacramento, or juicy tidbits about "civil war," "forcible overthrow," "red terror," "self-determination for the Black Belt," read unctuously to the jury by the state's battery of special prosecutors from more than 160 pieces of Communist literature. The five Hearst papers outdid themselves, but the Sacramento *Bee* was not far behind. Since the prosecution rested and the defense began its case, the newspaper reports, except for an occasional complete distortion of a defendant's testimony, have dwindled to a few paragraphs. The papers aren't interested in the defense. Anyway, they feel, a conviction is in the bag; no need to agitate the public or worry about the outcome any longer.

The fifteen defendants (indictments against two of the original eighteen have been dropped for lack of evidence and one is to be tried separately later) were arrested in Sacramento last July during the state-wide vigilante drive which followed the general strike. Fourteen of them—according to the *Daily Worker*—are members of the Communist Party. These are represented by Leo Gallagher, California International Labor Defense attorney, although six of them are really conducting their own defense under his guidance. One of the defendants, Norman Mini, is a member of the Workers' Party and is defended by Albert Goldman, Socialist attorney brought out from Chicago by the Non-Partisan Labor Defense. The inner political complications in such a defense situation are obvious to anyone familiar with the radical movement in this country.

It is no accident that of the hundreds of "reds" arrested on vagrancy charges during the terror of last summer, these are the only ones being tried for criminal syndicalism. Nor is it an accident that this trial is taking place in Sacramento rather than in San Francisco, scene of the general strike, or in Los Angeles, long the stronghold of the state's red-baiters. Sacramento is not only the political capital of California. It is the nerve center of an agricultural empire. The political and theoretical leadership of the revolution may be found in the two large cities. But in Sacramento last summer was gathered the leadership of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Union. It was this leadership for which the state's business and financial interests have been gunning for three years. Large-scale agriculture is California's dominant industry, and in 1933 agricultural strikes, for which organizers like Pat Chambers, Caroline Decker, and Jack Warnick are held mainly responsible, involved approximately 65 per cent of the state's entire crop value. The financial structure of California rests upon these crops, and there is no crime in California like the attempted organization of its hordes of underpaid seasonal and migratory workers—as the wobblies discovered prior to 1918. Let the D. A. R., the Better Americans, the Elks, the Friday Morning clubs get excited about the metropolitan lecturers and dialecticians. The industrial and financial rulers of California are realists. They know where their profits are menaced.

The agricultural situation in California which constitutes the background of the Sacramento case and of the whole wave of repression which seemed to have reached its climax last summer was discussed by Norman Mini, one of the Sacramento defendants, in *The Nation* of February 20 and there is no need to repeat the story. Not all the Sacramento defendants are organizers and strike leaders. Some of them were merely party and I. L. D. workers picked up in the raids on the Workers' School, Workers' Library, and the headquarters of the agricultural union. But the Workers' School, in addition to the usual courses in Marxist-Leninist theory, public speaking, agitation, and the like, was supposed to be teaching strike tactics. It was regarded as a hotbed of potential agricultural organizers. And the presence in Sacramento of the youthful leaders of the agricultural union was sufficient to center official attention on the local party section and its affiliates.

That the trial is regarded as a state-wide issue is obvious from the prosecution line-up. The special prosecutor, Neil McAllister, running for reelection as district attorney on a red-baiting platform, was overwhelmingly defeated by a somewhat liberal candidate in November. As McAllister's term ended, State Attorney General Webb, the man who wanted to disfranchise a large section of the unemployed of Los Angeles in an attempt to defeat Sinclair, appointed him special state prosecutor for the case at a salary of $50 a day—thus relieving the restive Sacramento taxpayers of the

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heavy burden of a long trial. "Red" Hynes of the Los Angeles Red Squad, California red-baiter extraordinary, is present as an authority on the revolution and as an expert witness for the prosecution. He brought with him from Los Angeles a file of Communist literature dating back to 1919. Hynes has mastered his propaganda and can turn unerringly to the most compromising passages of the most obscure Bolshevist tract. He knows *Imprecor* by heart. He can define correctly such words as "cadres" and can make a stab at dialectical materialism. It is his life-work. He is invaluable to the provincial prosecutors and in the corridors of the courthouse he wisecracks contemptuously about both the dull-witted McAllister and the fiery-tempered Leo Gallagher. He obviously considers himself the pillar upon which the whole prosecution rests. A much more Machiavellian figure in the prosecution line-up is Gil Parker, publicity director for the Associated Farmers, the agricultural counterpart and ally of the Industrial Association, dominated by the banks and the big growers and working hand in glove with the American Legion. It is Parker who directs the publicity campaign of the prosecution and who gives the assembled news hounds their daily theoretical line. The completely fabricated news story of Mini's testimony which appeared in all the newspapers bore all the earmarks of a Parker creation. Only the general-strike period last summer afforded a more perfect example of "public relations" than Parker is offering at Sacramento.

As the trial drags on to the infinite boredom of judge, jury, and reporters, it becomes obvious that while the motive behind the prosecution is to rid California of its most effective agricultural organizers, a vote of conviction by the jury will be based on quite different and much less concrete reasons. There is not a particle of substantiated testimony that any of the defendants have advocated or indulged in violence either in connection with agricultural disturbances or in their general party activity. Pat Chambers has been on trial before, in connection with the shooting of pickets by vigilantes in the cotton strike two years ago. Passions were more inflamed at that time than they are now. Yet he was acquitted by a small-town jury that could find no evidence of "incitement to violence" against him. Attempts to "get" Decker and Warnick on similar counts have failed. The prosecution charge that Mini, a former West Pointer, was teaching the young Communists of Sacramento "military drill" was exploded amid laughs in the courtroom. Not even the most inflamed imagination could conceive of these intelligent, clear-eyed, good-looking young people as sinister figures. Against the remaining defendants the evidence is wholly that of membership and opinion.

But two or three weeks of the prosecution's case were spent in reading copious extracts from Communist literature seized in last summer's raids. These extracts were picked, naturally, with an eye to hitting the prejudices and complexes of a politically unsophisticated middle-class jury. Some of the jurors cat-napped through a large part of the performance, but the prosecutor carefully raised his voice at the more provocative passages—provocative, that is, to an audience unaccustomed to the flamboyance of radical polemics. The jurors were wide awake when he read those more fantastic sections of Olgin's "Why Communism?" which dealt with a possible invasion of the White House. Here was something definite and concrete, something they could envisage. (And here was something which served no possible educational or propaganda purpose but which was an invaluable asset to a red-baiting district attorney.) Much of this material was as unrelated as a Graustarkian romance to the problems of the 112 housewives, unemployed ranch hands, and mechanics who filled the courtroom. But there was no questioning its prejudicial effect. Revolutionary literature cannot be written with an eye to middle-class jurors and small-town spectators, but unless its most valuable organizers and field workers are to be sacrificed unnecessarily, American communism needs to liquidate the literary hangovers of its underground period.

The latitude which Judge Lemmon permitted the prosecution in the introduction of material which had no relation to the activities of the defendants might have been excused on the ground that the California criminal-syndicalism law is aimed not merely at overt acts but at opinions. This material was declared relevant because it was supposed to show the nature of the organizations to which the defendants belonged or the opinions to which they subscribed. But to date no such latitude in the realm of theory has been permitted the defense. The prosecution has read from revolutionary documents and Comintern theses written in the early twenties. The judge's ruling that Darcy, the defense expert witness and party leader, must confine his testimony to specific meetings and events in which he participated may have the effect of ruling out any interpretation of the party's present position in relation to such subjects as "force and violence," any explanations of its program for the achievement of power. As the whole criminal-syndicalism charge hinges largely upon these points, the handicap to the defense is obvious.

That it is not, intellectually, an insurmountable handicap was proved during the cross-examination of Mini, the first defendant to take the stand in his own behalf. Without hedging an inch on his convictions, he quietly deflated the "red terror" fantasies of the prosecutor in a manner which won chuckles of appreciation from the spectators. The other defendants, occupying a somewhat less exposed position on this subject than a Trotzkyist, should be able to handle the clumsy McAllister with even less difficulty.

Incidentally, the recent denunciation of Mini as a "stool pigeon" in the Communist Party press constitutes one of the most discouraging incidents in the always discouraging history of radical factionalism. It is a charge which is not even believed by the people who make it and constitutes the triumph of a tactic over truth. In a public statement given out in defiance of the party line on this subject Jack Warnick has written: "The characterization by the *Western Worker* that Mini is 'a cowardly, treacherous stool pigeon' must be condemned as an attempt to frame the boy and ruin his reputation for the rest of his life." The so-called "confession" consists of a defiant statement of his own beliefs and of facts known to everyone made by Mini at the time of his arrest in August and headlined at that time in the Sacramento papers. It is well known that since his arrest Mini, who is a Sacramento boy and popular in the community, has refused two offers of immunity.

Neither the inevitable factionalism which has unfortunately raised its head above the desperate need of all of the defendants nor disagreement with the theoretical position of either or both of the groups involved should be permitted

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to interfere with the widest possible support—moral and financial—of their case. They are facing the combined forces of reaction and the rapid rise of a fascist spirit in California. They are not responsible for party lines or theoretical positions. They have been concerned for the most part with the actual struggles of the most exploited and harassed section of our population—the unorganized agricultural laborer and his family. It is chiefly for this "crime" that they are threatened with from four to eighty years in a California penitentiary. Their own personal superiority and the stupidity of the prosecution forces offer them little protection. The battle in Sacramento is not, unfortunately, an intellectual one. The result of that battle may decide the future of labor in California.

Contributions for the legal defense of the Sacramento prisoners may be sent to the American Civil Liberties Union, 434 Mills Building, San Francisco. Unless earmarked for either the Non-Partisan Labor Defense or the International Labor Defense, they will be divided between the two defense organizations by the American Civil Liberties Union.

The Little Yellow Schoolhouse

By HEYWOOD BROUN

IT was a delegate from Texas who best expressed the sentiment of the assembled educators at Atlantic City. "Of course, we have academic freedom down where I come from," he explained. "A man can teach whatever he wants as long as it isn't radical." And when the Resolutions Committee came to make its report, its sentiments on academic freedom just about lived up to this conception. The convention of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association voted down a mild rider which pledged the organization to defend teachers under attack, and a member of the committee explained that he and his associates had all but decided to leave out any reference to academic freedom whatsoever. It was, he said, a dangerous subject. Here is the text of the amendment which the educators threw out as being much too hot to handle:

> The schools of a democracy have an obligation to serve as scientifically as possible as an instrumentality for criticism of our social organizations. Academic freedom, particularly in such a time as this, should be explicitly defended in a penetrating and continuous inquiry into the causes and conditions of national distress.
>
> This department proposes to support with all its resources teachers attacked in the clear exercise of their professional obligation to such inquiry, if necessary to the extent of financing determinative legal appeal to the plan and intent of the Constitution touching freedom of speech.

Now that is hardly a revolutionary declaration. It could adequately be summarized in the statement, "The Department of Superintendence of the N. E. A. purposes to protect teachers in their constitutional right of free speech." The assembled educators decided that the Constitution was just a shade too radical for them to affirm in any such manner.

And yet the convention turned out to be a little less reactionary than might have been expected. The work of a few young men and one old one saved the superintendents from establishing a new low in the matter of cringing timidity. But for a speech by Charles A. Beard I believe the delegates would have adopted a resolution pinning garlands around the neck of William Randolph Hearst and hailing him as the patron and preserver of American education.

Uncle Charlie scared them out of that. In fact, his denunciation of Hearst was so vigorous that it shook the walls of San Simeon and changed the plans of the editor. After Dr. Beard had spoken, Mr. Hearst indicated to his agents that they need not attempt to force through a resolution of praise. He was willing to cry quits on the basis of having his name left out altogether. One humorous aspect of the situation lay in the fact that William Randolph Hearst was wholly unable to find out a thing about Dr. Beard's speech from his own newspapers. The blistering words were sent to him as a private communication. On the whole the New York papers behaved well. The *Times* carried Beard in full. The *Herald Tribune* cut out only two of the historian's most colorful phrases, and the *World-Telegram* and the *Post* reprinted the complete text in their second-day stories.

But the press associations seem to have taken the attitude that when an educator, even as distinguished a one as Dr. Beard, attacks a newspaper owner it isn't news. I have before me a clipping from the Pittsburgh *Press* (Scripps-Howard). I had referred to Dr. Beard's speech in a column printed two days later. The editors were apparently puzzled and eventually dug up the text of the Beard statement from the New York *Times*. A little box carried the following explanation: "EDITOR'S NOTE—The speech above referred to by Heywood Broun was not received by the *Press* through its regular telegraph services."

One curious feature of the Atlantic City gathering was that in spite of the superintendents' desire to "keep the reds out of the schools" there was every disposition to invite them to the convention as speakers. Seemingly nobody was shocked when Secretary Henry Wallace said that capitalism was near the end of the road. Stuart Chase had an attentive audience for his talk on planned production. Dr. Beard was allowed to come before the delegates in spite of his attack on Hearst, and this correspondent had his chance.

It was my childhood dream to be able to talk back to a teacher. At last I had it. I remembered the weary hours of copying maxims as a penalty for coming late to classes, and so I said, "Gentlemen, it seems to me that you are very tardy in your approach to academic freedom. Some of you have spoken of Moscow and of danger. Moscow be blowed, you haven't the nerve to go back to the Declaration of Independence. It's much too radical for you and so I assign each delegate to remain after this session and write in a large and legible hand one thousand times, 'All men are created free and equal.'"

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Labor Notes

Codes and Labor Standards

MANY who argue for the continuance of the Recovery Act do so in the belief that the codes contain labor requirements which would, if put into effect, genuinely improve wages, hours, and other working conditions. The codes are admirable, it is supposed; only enforcement is lacking. The general public does not clearly understand that the labor provisions of the ordinary code constitute a metaphysical experiment, so to speak, in appearance and reality. In appearance, the code establishes determinate labor standards, that is, maximum hours and minimum wages. In reality, each particular labor provision is so phrased as to release employers from any fixed legal obligation to conform to the nominal standards. Exception breeds upon exemption; qualification multiplies upon ambiguity. In the end, nothing is left but an affirmation of vague philanthropic intent. The worst offenders, as one might anticipate, are the major codes: iron and steel, electrical manufacturing, chemicals, lumber and timber products. The NRA was so eager to rush through the codes that it had little time and less energy to insist that the code labor provisions, their specific content to one side, should mean anything. At the same time the NRA committed the fatal mistake of reserving to employer associations the privilege of submitting the first code drafts. It is too late now to remedy the codes; a few months more and the NRA experiment, at least in its present form, will expire. But it would promote genuine federal labor legislation in the future to make it clear that the codification process has proved to be the worst possible way of achieving that ideal.

The Ohrbach Strike

SEVERAL hundred arrests have been made so far in the strike against the Ohrbach department store, now in its thirteenth week. It is one of the few strikes so far attempted by white-collar workers; the fact that Ohrbach's is situated on Union Square, the center of workers' activities in New York City, has helped to swell its picket line; and because the Ohrbach employees are organized in a branch of the Office Workers' Union, which also has a literary-trades section, the Union Square picket line has become the likeliest place in town for getting a view of New York's literary life. Particularly on Saturdays as many as 200 picketers have defied the ridiculous injunction prohibiting more than two pickets, while thousands of worker-spectators on the square have given aid and comfort to the marchers. Since the strike began there has been an orderly and peaceful procession of mass arrests and mass paroles—until Saturday, March 2. On that occasion some ninety pickets were held for two hours in inadequate quarters before being paroled. When they were allowed to leave an attempt to hurry them out resulted in confusion, the riot squad was called unnecessarily and several pickets were severely injured. Meanwhile a group of women organized as the League of Women Shoppers has taken up the Ohrbach strike as its first test of strength. The league will investigate the merits of strikes through meetings at which representatives of both sides will be heard. If the league decides that the employer is unfair to labor, the individual members will boycott his establishment. The Ohrbach strike will be discussed at a meeting of the league on Friday, March 8, at 8:30 at the Engineering Auditorium, Room 603, 29 West Thirty-ninth Street. A representative of Mr. Ohrbach has been invited.

Dear Nation Reader:

The strike of the Newspaper Guild against the Newark Ledger is now in its seventeenth week. The struggle is on the traditional and familiar issue of the right of employees to organize and bargain collectively. Justice Cotillo to the contrary, the Newspaper Guild feels that this right should not be denied to reporters, copy readers, photographers, office boys and the others who make up the editorial staff of a newspaper.

A year ago, it would have been almost unthinkable that a reporter in California should be sending part of his weekly pay to help other members of his craft on a picket line in Newark, New Jersey. But Guild members from all over the country have been and are supporting the strike. An infant organization has already spent more than $20,000 in fighting a battle which is vital to the life of the Guild. It is the hope and purpose of organized newspapermen to intensify all legitimate activities in the coming weeks.

We therefore make an appeal to all friends of organization to help us with financial contributions. In particular, we appeal to those who believe that it is right and necessary for "white collar" workers to come of age and cooperate.

We are informed that for every dollar the Guild spends, the publisher must spend fifteen. In other words, any contributor gets 15 to 1 for his donation, and those should be attractive odds. Checks should be made out to the American Newspaper Guild Emergency Fund, and addressed to the American Newspaper Guild, 49 West 45th Street, New York City.

The struggle is drawing to its critical stage. The fight can be won here and now. We wish to thank those organized groups which have already extended generous support. We are now suggesting that this is no private fight, but that any individual who believes in the right of collective bargaining can do his share to help. Sincerely,

Heywood Broun

President American Newspaper Guild.

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Books and Drama

"Que Sçay-je?"

The Autobiography of Montaigne. By Marvin Lowenthal. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.50.

IT requires considerable temerity to tamper with the text of a classic. Few misdeeds call forth from appropriate quarters such a fury of condemnation, and, in sober fact, the results are not usually fortunate. Tampering, however, is far too mild a word for what Mr. Lowenthal has done to the text of Montaigne, and yet for once, at least, what seems like unparalleled impudence fully justifies itself. "The Autobiography of Montaigne" is a useful and entrancing book.

Most of those who have seriously read the essays—and the number is probably not as large as is politely assumed—must admit that they are, after all, rather difficult going. In the first place, very little prose written as early as they were seems really readable to us, for the simple reason that the thought structure of the paragraph to which we are habituated had not yet been established. In the second place, Montaigne's writing was not only unusually disjointed even by the standards of his own age, but also so unconscionably elusive and chatty that his best remarks are often buried under a mass of, to us, irrelevant pedantry. To read him is to rake a slag heap for an occasional piece of precious ore; what we remember is seldom any essay as a whole but only a sentence here and there which leaps out from the page and which often seems like a modern interpolation.

The obvious solution is a volume of selections, and selections have often been made, but they are for the most part either collections of the best essays or merely selected passages which, when lifted from their context, seem if possible more fragmentary than before. What no one except Mr. Lowenthal seems ever to have perceived is the possibility of arranging selected sentences into a new and continuous whole. The method is extremely drastic and it must have involved a very pretty job of jigsaw-puzzle solving. The author, apparently, has added absolutely nothing. He has merely combined fragments in a new order and has not hesitated to lift even single sentences from one place in order to join them to others found elsewhere, but he has done his job brilliantly. What one gets is not merely the essence of Montaigne's thought and attitude but a book which is coherent, continuous, and, in our sense, amazingly readable. Perhaps it gives a false idea of Montaigne's style; he did not write like this. It does, on the other hand, give a very accurate idea of the temper of his thought and of the reasons why he is memorable.

Montaigne, so the textbooks tell us, was historically important as one of the first great examples of bourgeois skepticism. Like some of his less well-known predecessors of the Italian Renaissance he embodied the revolt of reason and the senses against dogma and authority. But the effect of Mr. Lowenthal's book is not to make one think of "historical interest." It is to remind one how much of what Montaigne had to say is memorable today and also of the fact that it is absurd to fall into the textbook habit of taking too seriously the "ages" of this and the "ages" of that. Certainly the historical movement of which Montaigne is a representative did not actually conquer the world. His type of mind exists today, but so does its opposite, and he is still interesting for the very reason that the implied conflict between his type and the more positive, aggressive, and dogmatic type is as real now as it ever was. He does not "speak for his age." He speaks for a persistent attitude and he argues a question which never was and probably never will be settled. There are always conflicts to be in and to be above, and there is no more general agreement in our own day than there was in his as to whether the Calvins and the Luthers or the Erasmuses and the Montaignes are nearest right.

The temptation is to quote at inordinate length and to quote some of the many passages in which Montaigne anticipated the conventional advanced opinion of our own time. For example:

> We have thought to tie the nuptial knot more firmly by removing all means of dissolving it. But the knot of our will and affection is loosened by just so much as the constraint is tightened.

To me, however, it seems more interesting to cite, not those passages which show Montaigne "ahead of his age," but those which define his temper and which illustrate, not how his thought has triumphed, but how sharply the line is still drawn between the easy-going skeptic and the man of faith. I choose just two sentences because I can think of no others quite so likely to fill with incredulity and indignation those who have nothing of Montaigne in them:

> On seeing the havoc of our civil wars we all of us cry out that the machinery of the universe is cracking, and that the Day of Judgment is at our throat. We do not stop to consider that the world has seen worse times, and that even at the present moment people are enjoying themselves in a thousand corners of the globe.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Mr. Strachey States the Case for Communism

The Nature of Capitalist Crisis. By John Strachey. Covici-Friede. $3.

IN the nature of things any review of Mr. Strachey's new book is likely to reveal as much of the reviewer's previous opinions as of Mr. Strachey's. For while Mr. Strachey's book is new and powerful in the way it presents its case, the case itself is scarcely new. What Mr. Strachey sets out to do is to predict the final crisis of capitalism and the inevitability of a choice between communism and fascism. His argument rests, first, upon a brilliant and destructive analysis of all schools of capitalist economics, and, second, upon a restatement of Marx's theory of value and surplus value in order to determine what is happening to profits and the rate of profit and what must happen therefore to capitalism itself.

In the course of his argument he breaks a valiant lance against a great many men who are likely to have something to say in their own behalf. Apparently he rests his ultimate choice of communism as against socialism upon an interpretation of, and deduction from, the Marxist formula $P' = S' \; v/c$, in which P' stands for the rate of profit, v/c for the proportion of variable to constant capital, and S' for the rate of surplus value. (It will be remembered that, according to Marx, variable capital is the capital used to employ labor, while constant capital is everything else, including the cost of machinery and raw material. Surplus value is value which is created by labor, but which the capitalist is able to appropriate in profit, rent, and interest over and above the value of labor power, determined, as Mr. Strachey reminds us, "by the amount of necessaries needed to enable labor and their descendants to maintain this output of labor power in perpetuity.")

Now in general terms Mr. Strachey's thesis, as he would be the first to admit, is at least as old as the third volume

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of Marx's "Capital," and most reviewers will approach his problem with some previous opinions of their own. I certainly am no exception, and in all fairness the reader of this review must bear that fact in mind. No opinions of a reviewer, however, can in honesty deny to Mr. Strachey the credit of having done a highly competent, generally lucid, and sometimes brilliant job in a difficult field. He does a particularly satisfactory job in showing why any philosophy of capitalist crisis requires more than an explanation in terms of money. In the course of this demonstration he shows how in the end the various schools of those who believe that we have not enough money for consumption and those who believe that we have too much money for consumption arrive at the same profit-plenty dilemma. Capitalism cannot produce without profit, and profit is destroyed by the improvement of the various processes through which capitalists at first derive profit in the production of plenty, only in the end to lose all possibility of profit in a glut on the market. Parenthetically, one wishes that Mr. Strachey, after examining the opinions of Major Douglas, J. A. Hobson, Dr. Hayek, and others, had turned his attention to the examination of such a realistic book as Professor Slichter's "Towards Stability" and such statistical studies as "America's Capacity to Produce," "America's Capacity to Consume," and "The Formation of Capital," which the Brookings Institution has published. They have a distinct bearing upon Mr. Strachey's analysis which is not altogether met by his assault upon various economic theories.

When Mr. Strachey turns to his positive arguments, I, for one, am inclined to give him credit for doing more than any writer I know to answer Böhm-Bawerk's brilliant attack on the "great contradiction" which he and others have found in the Marxian contention that although value is created solely by labor, the rate of profit depends on the composition of capital, that is, on the proportion between variant and constant capital. Mr. Strachey does the job partly by gently tossing out chapter ten in volume three to the wolves, that is, to Böhm-Bawerk. He rubs in the fact that Marx was concerned with the fate of capitalism, not with particular prices at which a broker or a merchant might buy or sell.

In spite of my respect for the job Mr. Strachey has done —his analysis has strengthened my own conviction of the inevitable destruction of laissez faire capitalism by its internal contradictions—I am compelled somewhat sorrowfully to admit that I am still of the opinion that the Marxian formula, even as interpreted by Mr. Strachey, has not the significance which he seems to think it has in forecasting the end of capitalism. There is too much that is uncertain about the terms, and there is the plain historical fact that the all-important time element has eluded Marxist prophets. Thus value is created not by labor generally but by socially necessary labor, and we never know what is socially necessary labor with any accuracy until after the event. The purpose of Marx's study in volume three was not to tell us how to determine prices, yet "prices represent, though for particular commodities imperfectly, units of socially necessary time." Labor value is determined by what may be called a subsistence wage, but every Marxist from Marx to Strachey has admitted that there is no fixing of a subsistence wage in terms of physical commodities, valid for every time and place. Real wages fluctuate and have on the whole increased under capitalism, though nothing like as much as they should have, given our increase in productive power. Marx's whole theory of the rate of profit necessarily depends on capital's being free to move from one industry to another under competitive conditions which a semi-monopoly capitalism rather successfully limits. Hence no one knows when capitalism will break down for lack of profit. The great Russian Revolution did not come in a country in which the logical expectation of profit had been exhausted. In short, valuable as is Marx's diagnosis as illustrating a tendency, I do not think it can support the weight Mr. Strachey puts upon it.

When in the last chapters Mr. Strachey turns to his practical application, he becomes far more of an evangelist than a scientist. One may come nearer to agreeing with him than with G. D. H. Cole in his analysis of the economics of fascism; one may accept to a large degree his criticism of the hope of the British Labor Party that it can proceed rather slowly through a reformed capitalism to socialism; one may share much of his faith in Russian achievements—and then challenge many of his judgments by asking, "So what?" The case for the disintegration of capitalism and the necessity for a thoroughgoing socialism does not rest solely on Mr. Strachey's line of reasoning, nor can it be convincingly based solely on it. Still less is there anything in his argument to compel us inexorably to adopt the Russian formula and technique or else revert to fascist barbarism. Believing as I do that fascism, in spite of its talk of favors to the little man, is a last attempt to stabilize the profit system, I see certain tendencies in Germany which make me think it barely possible that in the end fascism may produce a poor and dreary sort of planned economy in which the mainspring is no longer profit, but under which the present beneficiaries of surplus value may be granted allowances, a kind of payment of rent upon what they have hitherto regarded as their capital as well as upon their land. Practically I am not as sure as I once was, and as I want to be now, that the Russian development of an official class and a bureaucracy may not be in terms of social values a disquieting approach to what is happening or may happen under fascism. Anyway, these questions will never be settled by deduction from any formula about the rate of profit in a disintegrating capitalism. Mr. Strachey's brilliant attempt to state his case for communism as a derivative from one economic law, so definite that it can be stated in an algebraic formula, strengthens in this reviewer's mind the case for pluralism in the interpretation of life and in the construction of the socialist society. This view is, I am convinced, consistent with a socialism so deeply indebted to Marx's manifold services that it may, in a genuine —though not dogmatic—sense, be called Marxist, even though it is a bit skeptical of the weight and value of the formula $P'=S' v/c$.

NORMAN THOMAS

New Country

Collected Poems. By C. Day Lewis. Random House. $2.50.
Vienna. By Stephen Spender. Random House. $1.25.

AS the poems in Mr. Lewis's volume are dated 1929-33, these four years presumably contain the full period of his practice as a poet. It is not often that a poet has the good fortune to have a "collected" edition so early in his career; but so generous have the fates already been to the group of young English writers of which he is a member that one is not too much surprised by the pretentiousness of the present occasion. Or, rather, it adds nothing to the astonishment with which one has followed the breathlessly hasty distribution of laurels that the arrival of these poets has stimulated in certain circles. From being something like the next step in a logical argument about modern verse (as Mr. Lewis demonstrates in his very self-complacent essay) their poetry soon became a fashion; and from being a fashion, apparently, it has now become an institution.

Mr. Lewis is, in one sense, the most articulate member of the group. Where W. H. Auden communicates his dissatisfaction with the present order through satire, concrete allegory,

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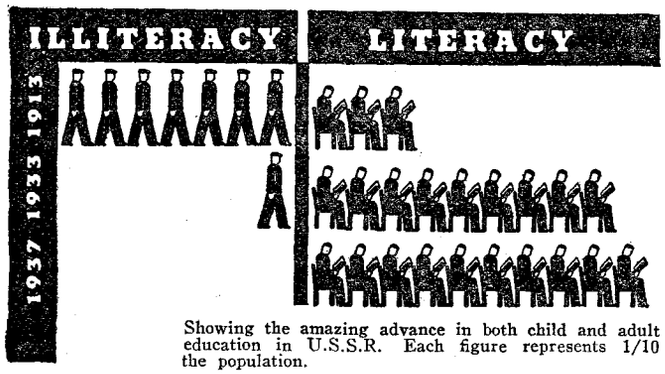
and technical indirections of every sort, Mr. Lewis comes straight to the point: his harangues have the blunt lucidity of a school coach warming up his team against a rival. Indeed, Mr. Lewis is so intent on being articulate at all costs that he does not permit himself to have any of the feelings which usually confuse and retard the poet. Among these rejected feelings must be included the distrust of rhetoric, the fear of repetition, and the sense of the difficulty of the craft in which he is working. In the long essay printed at the end of the volume and entitled A Hope for Poetry, Mr. Lewis selects Hopkins, Wilfred Owen, and Eliot as his "ancestors." But all these poets differ from Mr. Lewis in at least one important respect: none of them was quite so prolific. And from a reading of Hopkins's letters Mr. Lewis might well have learned the meaning of what is understood by the humility of the artist.

In the recent uprising of the Vienna Socialists Stephen Spender has struck upon a subject in every sense appropriate for the theme which he has been attempting, in a diffuse and uncrystallized form, to express in his lyrics. If he has failed to write a magnificent poem, therefore, it is not because of the subject, which is a tremendous one from almost any point of view, but because of a still insufficient fusion between his theme and his emotions. The theme is there, and the emotions are there, but the two do not coalesce in a way that would give an ordered intensity to the whole. The theme and the emotions seem to exist on different planes, to be expressed in separate sections of the work. It is not an accident that the subject comes through most successfully when the personal feeling about it is temporarily withheld; as, for example, on page 23, where Mr. Spender drops into a few lines of straight prose reporting. The difficulty would seem to be that the imagery employed to render the feeling is not suitable for the proper rendering of the subject. And the jarring discordances between the somewhat hysterical modern feeling and the very simple realities of the situation confirm the suspicion that the complex type of imagery which Mr. Spender and his friends have taken over from Hopkins and Eliot may not be appropriate for charting that "new country" whose discovery they are announcing in their verse. For this may be required a revolution in the imagery and rhythm of poetry as drastic as the revolution in society. At the same time Mr. Spender's ambitious sortie into the narrative form, if it is not a success, includes some of the finest and most brilliant single passages that he has yet written.

WILLIAM TROY.



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Living History

The Black Consul. By Anatolii Vinogradov. The Viking Press. $2.75.

"THE BLACK CONSUL" is probably one of the most remarkable historical novels ever published. It is difficult to say whether it is good or bad; one can only be sure that it is extraordinary. Its hero is Toussaint L'Ouverture, the Negro Liberator of Haiti; its background is the French Revolution. The author of the novel is Anatolii Vinogradov, a Soviet writer, yet the work is quite unmarked by that curious narrowness of outlook which has been so characteristic of Russian fiction, Czarist and Soviet alike. Unexpectedly, the story of the great Negro leader is told, not from a "Russian" point of view, not from a "modern" point of view, not even from a strictly "proletarian" point of view, but truly as if it came from the lips of a French revolutionary. Far from seeing his tale from the vantage-point of Moscow, Vinogradov has so immersed himself in his material that he appears to know no century but the eighteenth, no country but France and French Haiti.

This technique of writing history has been tried before, but haphazardly. No previous writer has had the courage to use it so unwaveringly, so exclusively, as Vinogradov. Other authors have let famous historical characters wander in and out of their novels, as it were casually, but the reader has always been judiciously prodded into immediate recognition. Thus if the ordinary novelist wants to indicate that a drunken young poet in an Elizabethan tavern is the Marlowe whom the schoolbooks quote, he will not only have the barmaids call him "Kit" but he will at once set him to declaiming some of the more famous lines from "Tamburlaine." These are not Vinogradov's methods. His personages wear no labels. One knows Marat first only as a doctor; Lavoisier is introduced as the director of the national powder works, and it is some time before one is sure that the munitions maker is also the familiar eminent scientist. Henri Christophe, who later made himself King of Haiti, is never more than an adjutant of Toussaint's. André Chenier passes through the novel briefly, but one does not see him guillotined. Charlotte Corday is "a woman," no more. Beyond this, the book is larded with documents of the period, documents often half-incomprehensible to the average modern reader, yet never a word of explanation is tendered.

To us who are accustomed to having our history doled out predigested, neatly set in perspective, the effect of Vinogradov's novel is healthily disconcerting. Out of a series of rude fragments a strange story is built. Liberty, equality, and fraternity are proclaimed by the revolution in Paris, and in Haiti Negro slaves and half-enslaved people of color are stirred to think of liberty for themselves. A delegation of colored people, among them Toussaint L'Ouverture, is sent to the Constituent Assembly to demand their rights. But the assembly is not as sympathetic as its watchwords are noble. The sugar

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interests, the plantation owners, are powerful among the moderates. Robespierre and Marat are well-disposed but preoccupied. While the assembly debates the question in academic speeches, Negroes are secretly murdered in the streets of Paris. It is left to Toussaint L'Ouverture to escape to Haiti and raise a black army to wrest freedom from free France. He is a great general. He commands unbounded loyalty. For a time he is successful. He frees the slaves and makes himself governor of the new Haiti, and while Robespierre remains in power, he is secure. But Robespierre falls, the Directory succeeds him, and in the rising Bonaparte the plantation owners find a new ally and Toussaint an implacable and unscrupulous enemy. A French army is sent to subdue Haiti and to restore slavery. Toussaint is tricked into defeat and ultimate ignoble death.

In Vinogradov's version of the Liberator's story one misses a great deal. One is quite deprived of that sense of familiarity, that comfortable adjustment to the milieu, with which other historians obligingly furnish their readers. Only the most learned students of French history will be able to follow, unperplexed, the turbulent action of "The Black Consul." The ordinary reader will need encyclopedias to guide him through the novel, and even with their help he will still find great chunks of the plot hopelessly obscure. Yet, in exchange for clarity, Vinogradov has brought us something else, something quite as valuable and rarer. Out of the very confusion of the novel, its disordered time sequence, its unmotivated characters, there arises a powerful sense of life, of the mystery of human character, of the tumult of human events, of time passing, not time past. In the harsh, unembellished prose of this odd novel one will meet history before it became history, history caught while it was still alive.

MARY MCCARTHY

Shorter Notices

Artemus, Fare Thee Well. By Helena Carus. Little, Brown and Company. $2.

It seems to be the fate of those novels which shun their own time and try to bring to life dead ages to become rather lifeless themselves. Whether this is a result of the remoteness of their material or of some limitation in the author, suggested in his very choice of such material, is not quite clear; it is a fate, however, from which Mrs. Carus's competent novel of ancient Greece is not exempt. In its technical finish, its detached perception, its skilful evocation of a bygone world, it has reaped the rewards of its theme, but it suffers from the limitations which such a theme seems invariably to impose—lack of immediacy, weakness of characterization, and a certain level, toneless quality of style.

Little Era in Old Russia. By Irina Skariatina. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

Irina Skariatina's latest book is listed as "autobiography." Much more accurately it could be classified under "Children's Books: Fairy Tales." Its whole tone is that of timelessness: "Once upon a time little Era was born in Old Russia." Above her cradle Jupiter shone on that late afternoon in November. Over the fairy princess old English Nurse Nana bent, and the astrologically inclined "Doca," physician to the great household and country estate. Far away from the blue-silk and white-lace crib a "wicked" small brother and sister stamped and shouted their rage that a girl child had been born instead of a boy. Christened to the rustle of stiff gold brocade, she begins to travel the road that leads straight to the "fairy prince," whose love poem to her fills the last page and brings in the first jarring note of "realism"—for, like most adolescent love verse, it is extremely bad. But the rest is pure fairy-tale tone. The story

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is like an Easter egg laid over with gold and netted with jewels; there is never a chance for the chick to come through. If this were not "autobiography," it would stir no queries; we should simply read or not read the story. As it is, a hundred fine questions raise their heads through these four hundred pages. What, after all, was little Era really like? And her mother, her father, her sisters, and brother? What was life really like on a great estate in Old Russia to a child sprouted there? We shall never know from this book. For time has sunk too much too deep and has brushed all the rest in rose color.

Drama

"Awake and Sing"

THE new offering of the Group Theater is called "Awake and Sing" (Belasco Theater). The author is one Clifford Odets who has long been a member of the Group's acting company, and the play reveals as interesting a new talent as I have seen in the theater for a long time. To say that it deals with the humor and the tragedy of a Jewish family domiciled in the Bronx, that it recreates from shrewd observation the minds and manners of a stubborn and struggling family, is by no means to say enough. Realistic plays of Jewish life are sufficiently common to be almost standardized, but one of the most important things about "'Awake and Sing" is an extraordinary freshness. Observation is there in full measure but so, too, is something else—enthusiasm, passion, and the same almost painful intensity of feeling that distinguishes the characters. What Mr. Odets has done is to achieve a paradoxical combination of detachment and participation. He observes like an outsider, reproducing with vivid and humorous truth manners and habits as they could be observed and reproduced only by one who could stand off and look. Yet at the same time it is plain enough that this detachment is purely intellectual and artistic. Emotionally he is still close to the people he is writing about, and he understands them from the inside out. His is another generation and it has formulated a new philosophy, but he holds his convictions and pursues his aims with the same sort of intensity.

Ostensibly the moral of the play is a revolutionist's moral. It ends when the young son of the family frees himself from his obsession with a purely personal rebellion against the poverty which separates him from his girl and determines to throw himself with enthusiasm into the class struggle. But this conclusion, which comes very suddenly and without having been adequately prepared for, seems almost like an afterthought. Actually, the subject of the play is not this one specific protest and rebellion but the persistent and many-sided rebellion of human nature against everything which thwarts it. No member of the family really understands what the others want. The competent, managing mother no more understands the passion of the grandfather for Marx and music than she understands her daughter's desire for something more than a safe marriage. And yet, to a certain degree, each can understand the other because each knows what it is to want something with agonizing intensity and to nurse that want day in and day out with not a moment's remission. The young son who turns revolutionist is directing his determination into one channel, but, as the play so vividly illustrates, the same sort of determination may be directed into any one of many. Perhaps his aim is, for the moment at least, the most intelligent and useful, but the real secret of mankind's success, the real hope for its future, does not lie in anything so specific as any one crusade or any one determination. It lies in the persistence of

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its passion, its unwillingness to accept defeat for its desires. It can go on indefinitely insisting that it will be happy and free, tirelessly protesting against the fact that it is not; and if perchance one generation does surrender, there is always another wanting the old things with a young determination to have them. Mr. Odets's characters are ignorant and often crude, but his play, despite its tragedies, is exhilarating just because he makes it so clear that people like this are going to go right on demanding of life more than it will ever give them.

Mr. Odets probably learned something of his manner from Hemingway and the other members of the hard-boiled school. He has something of their clipped utterance and of their brutal and shattering irrelevancies. But he is not really a member of their school because he has none of their despairing sadism; because, in a word, he constitutes in himself a specific literary illustration of the thesis of his play: as soon as one generation of writers has demonstrated to its own satisfaction that it is no longer possible to admire anything in human nature or to hope for anything in it, another comes along and does both. As a dramatist, Mr. Odets, I should say, is at a crossroad, and it will be interesting to see in his next play whether he has chosen to go off in the direction of the specifically "revolutionary" drama or to follow the more broadly humanistic tradition from which the present play does not really depart. Meanwhile "Awake and Sing" is being acted by the Group in a way which shows its members to be perfectly at home in just this kind of drama. Luther Adler as a young cynic, Phoebe Brand as the daughter, and J. Edward Bromberg as a successful uncle are probably best, though the entire cast, which includes also Stella Adler and Morris Carnovsky, is good.

"The Bishop Misbehaves" (Cort Theater) is one of those quite English mystery-comedies which are sometimes a relief after the frenzies of American melodrama. In this one Walter Connolly makes a good deal out of the rather slight opportunities offered him in the role of a bishop whose passion for detective stories leads him into the successful attempt to solve a crime. Unfortunately Jane Wyatt has almost nothing to do. "The Distant Shore" (Morosco Theater) presents an excellent performance by Roland Young in the role of that famous Dr. Crippen who murdered his unpleasant wife on impulse. As a whole, however, the dramatization of the crime is rather routine.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Contributors to This Issue

LOUIS FISCHER, Moscow correspondent of *The Nation*, is in New York for the publication of his new book, "Soviet Journey," which will be brought out on March 25.

LEO WOLMAN is the chairman of the Automobile Labor Board.

W. M. LEISERSON is the chairman of the National Mediation Board.

KATHLEEN BARNES is a member of the research staff of the Institute of Pacific Relations.

TRAVERS CLEMENT is coauthor with Lillian Symes of "Rebel America."

HEYWOOD BROUN, the well-known columnist of the *World-Telegram*, is president of the American Newspaper Guild.

NORMAN THOMAS, one of the leaders of the Socialist Party in the United States, is the author of "Human Exploitation."

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